

# Swara

East AFRICAN WILD LIFE Society

July / August 1996 Volume 19:4



## The Maasai Mara *Whose heritage?*

Mountain  
Gorillas  
*Only 320  
remain*



Plus:

*Painted wolves; White water; Echo pt.II*

UK



Make the connection with Kenya Airways at Heathrow



KENYA

When you fly to the UK, take off with Kenya Airways.

Unlike other international airlines that fly to London, Kenya Airways is the only airline that flies non-stop and direct from Nairobi to Heathrow. Here you have a choice of 133 connections

a week to Glasgow and 378 more to major cities through the UK.

At Gatwick you have the choice of just 22 to Glasgow and only 137 to other cities. And that means a rather long spell in the Transit Lounge or an increasingly bothersome

cross-country journey to Heathrow.

If you're flying from Kenya to the Glasgow or anywhere else in the UK, you'll make the connection a lot easier with Kenya Airways, the Pride of Africa.

 **Kenya Airways**  
The Pride of Africa

# Swara

The Magazine of the East African Wild Life Society



July / August 1996  
Vol. 19 No. 4

**Editor:**

David Simpson

**Editorial Committee:**

Esmond Bradley-Martin

Rick Edwards

Louisa Lockwood

Janet Njoroje

Fleur Ng'weno

Jonathan Scott

Daniel Stiles

**Advertising Executive:**

Jane N. Kariuki

**Graphic Layout:**

David Simpson

**Printing:**

Majestic Printing Works Ltd.

**Colour Separations:**

PrePress Ltd.

**Advertising Sales:**

Advertising Department

Swara Magazine

P.O. Box 20110

Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: 748170

Fax: 746868

**Swara Offices:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Museum Hill Centre

Museum Hill Road, Nairobi.

**Swara Magazine:**

P.O. Box 20110, Nairobi, Kenya.

Tel: 254-2-748170

Fax: 254-2-746868

E-mail: EAWLS@elci.gn.apc.org

Swara is a bimonthly magazine owned and published by the East African Wild Life Society. The Society is a non-profit-making organisation formed in 1961 by amalgamating the Wild Life Societies of Kenya and Tanzania (both founded in 1956). It is Society policy to conserve wildlife and its habitat in all its forms as a national and international resource.

Copyright © 1996 East African Wild Life Society. No reproduction whatsoever is permitted without the written permission of the Editor. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily the official view of the Society. Swara accepts the information given by contributors as correct.

**T**HE MAASAIMARA IS PROBABLY Kenya's most important and well-known tourist attraction. Also, as the northern tip of the massive Serengeti ecosystem, it is integral to the continued survival of one of East Africa's truly amazing wildlife spectacles - the annual wildebeest migration. However, as its name suggests, the Maasai Mara is not only crucial to wildlife. To the Maasai people it is their past, present and future home. And it is ultimately to the Maasai people that the world must turn to preserve this unique resource.

The complex interactions of the people and wildlife of the Maasai Mara are the subject of *Focus on...*, a regular feature that will spotlight, in every issue, an area of East African conservation. The features and photographs in this edition's *Focus on...* illustrate not only the current controversy over the Mara, but also why it is so essential to preserve it.

This edition's *Insight* also comes from the Maasai Mara. The Hon. Samson ole Tuya, Member of Parliament for Narok South, in whose district the Maasai Mara lies, argues the Maasai case for retaining the controversial current system of local administration for the Mara.

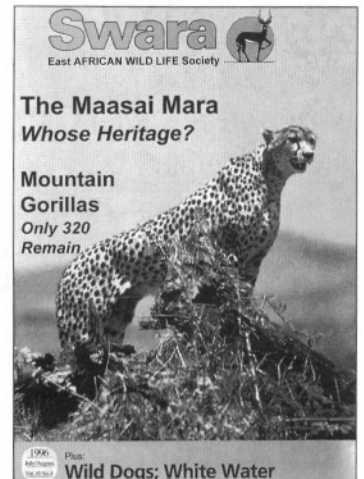
Unsurprisingly, at the root of the Maasai Mara's current problems is the perennial topic of human/wildlife conflict. How this conflict is resolved across Africa will determine the future of much of the continent's wild species. Over the coming months, *Swara* will feature the many facets of this fascinating debate. One man only too familiar with human/wildlife conflict is John Waithaka, KWS' Elephant Programme Coordinator, who has the unenviable task of dealing with the problems created by trying to conserve elephants in a rapidly shrinking world. John's *Profile* appears on page 12.

Finally, among the remainder of this issue's offerings are two stories which illustrate the power of involving local communities in conservation. From Kenya's rugged south, Nigel Dougherty reports some good news about wild dogs while, from Laikipia, Sacha Cook brings an account of a major new initiative which may prove a model for future community conservation efforts.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of *Swara*.

David Simpson, Editor

## In Brief:



### Cover photograph:

### A cheetah looks over the Maasai Mara.

by Rick Edwards



The Impala antelope is the symbol of the East African Wild Life Society. Swara (sometimes pronounced Swala) is the Swahili word for antelope.



## East African Wild Life Society

### Patrons:

The President of Kenya  
The President of Tanzania  
The President of Uganda

*The East African Wild Life Society was formed in 1961 by an amalgamation of the Wild Life Societies of Kenya and Tanzania (both founded in 1956) and Ugandan wildlife conservationists.*

**Elected Chairman:** Dr. Theuri Njoka.

**Chief Executive:** Nehemiah K. Rotich.

**Vice-Chairmen:** Dr. Imre Loeffler; Dr. Cornelius L. Mollel; Dr. Mary Okwakol.

**Treasurer:** Andrew K. Mbaya.

**Trustees:** Professor Fredrick L.B. Kayanja; John Koitie; Albert Mongi; George Muhoho; Hilary Ng'weno; Hon. William A. ole Ntimama.

**Honorary Vice-chairmen:** Mervyn Cowie, CBE, ED.; Michael Werikhe; James H. Webb.

**Elected Members of Council:** Nathaniel arap Chumo; Prof. Steven Njuguna; Clara Kathurima; Mary Rigby; Dr. Reardon Olubayo; Daniel Choge.

**Uganda Branch Committee:** Dr. Mary Okwakol (Chairperson); Andrew Cavell (Treasurer); Alex Muhwezi (Vice Treasurer); Robert Law; Jimmy Kiberu; Ray Victorine.

**Management Committee:** Nehemiah K. Rotich (Chairman); Mwamba Shete (Secretary); Mary Rigby; Nathaniel arap Chumo; Andrew K. Mbaya.

**Scientific & Technical Committee:** David Mbuvi (Chairman); Dr Paul Kimutai Rono; Dr. Francis Muthuri; Dr Micheni Ntiba; Wilberforce Ottichillo; Jaspert Agatsiva; Nehemiah K. Rotich; Mwamba Shete.

**Programme areas:** *Species survival, National Parks and protected areas, conservation education, wetlands, marine and forest resources and water catchments*

**Honorary Members:** M. Bishop; James H. Webb, Webb & Sons Incorporated; Toyota Kenya; Chas G. Allen Jr.

**Head Office:** P.O. Box 20110,  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Museum Hill Centre,  
Museum Hill Road, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Tel: Nairobi 748170. Fax: 746868.

Email: EAWLS@elci.gn.apc.org

### Society Shop and Membership Sales:

Nairobi Hilton Arcade and Museum Hill Centre.  
Telephone: 331888 or 221780

**Uganda Branch:** P.O. Box 7422,  
Kampala, Uganda.

Tel: Uganda 233061.

Email: EAWLS@mukla.gn.apc.org

**Netherlands Branch:** Stichting EAWLS Netherlands, Burg. Verheullaan 59,  
2396 EP Koudekerk a/d Rijn, Netherlands.

Members are requested to address any queries to the Chief Executive.

# The East African

## Why Join EAWLS?

**T**HE EAST AFRICAN WILD LIFE SOCIETY WAS FORMED IN 1961 TO safeguard wildlife and its habitat in all forms as a regional and international resource. A non-profit making organisation, the Society plays a leading role in promoting conservation and the sustainable use of wildlife and the environment throughout East Africa.

Over the past 40 years the East African Wild Life Society has invested more than US \$2 million on over 1,000 environmental, wildlife and conservation education projects. The Society sponsors regular seminars and workshops and publishes *Swara*, East Africa's leading wildlife magazine, six times a year.

### Members of the East African Wild Life Society receive:

- Six issues annually of *Swara*. Each edition contains features, profiles and in-depth analyses, keeping you constantly up to date with conservation in East Africa.
- A Membership Card with a discount of 10% on all cash purchases over 100/= in our Society shops. Overseas members can order Society merchandise, including our popular festive season cards and calendars, by mail.
- Access to the library in our offices at the Museum Hill Centre, Nairobi.
- Discounts with select tour companies and hotels in East Africa.
- The *African Journal of Ecology*, available for only £42.50 or US \$79.50 to Society Members (the normal price is £156.50 or US \$257.00).
- A free car windscreen sticker.
- The satisfaction of helping conservation.



*Some of the items that we sell in our East African Wild Life Society shops. The East African Wild Life Society is a non-profit making organisation. All proceeds go directly to wildlife conservation projects.*

**Join EAWLS today  
Help us conserve  
our priceless heritage**



# East African Wild Life Society Corporate Members

## Special Corporate Members:

### Sponsor:

Chikadee Hillfarm Inc. (USA)  
Barclaytrust Investment Services Ltd.

### Donors:

Kenya Wildlife Service  
Nairobi Safari Club

### Contributors:

Abercrombie and Kent Ltd.  
Air Kenya Aviation Ltd.  
Barclays Bank (K) Ltd.  
Coca Cola Africa Ltd.  
Peart, N. E.  
Prestige Hotels  
Price's Tax Service (USA)  
Reckitt & Colman (Ind) Ltd.  
Sarova Hotels/Across Africa Safaris  
Securicor Kenya Ltd.  
SGS (K) Ltd.  
Unga Group Ltd.

### Ordinary Corporate Members:

Amro Bank  
AT&T Global Ingor Solutions (K) Ltd.  
Aberdare Educational Centre  
AcaciaTrails Ltd.  
Acacia Travel Inc  
Africa Safari Club  
Africa Expeditions Ltd.  
African Tours and Hotels  
African Wildlife Foundation  
African Wildlife Safari P/Ltd. - (Australia)  
African Quest Safaris  
Agricultural Finance Corp.  
Air Travel and Related Studies Centre  
Albatros Travel and Safaris  
Archers Tours & Travel Ltd.  
Associated Battery Manufacturers  
Atlas Copco (K) Ltd.

Bamburi Portland Cement  
Barclays Bank (Uganda) Ltd.  
Barclay Trust Investment Services Ltd.  
Baring, J.  
Bartkus, J.  
B.A.T. (Uganda) Ltd.  
Big Five Tours and Expeditions  
Bishop, A.J.  
Block Hotels Ltd.  
Brooke Bond (K) Ltd.  
Bruce Travel  
Bushbuck Adventures  
Canon Assurance (K) Ltd.  
Carbacid (CO.) Ltd.  
Care International (Uganda)  
Charlet, A.  
Cheli and Peacock Limited  
Clark PR  
Columbus Zoo Park Association  
Commercial Bank of Africa Ltd.  
C.M.C. Holdings Ltd.  
De Filippi, Carlo  
Delamere Camps  
De Wilde Laurent  
Diamond Trust of Kenya Ltd.  
Down, A.W.A.  
East African Industries Ltd.  
E.A. Ornithological Safaris Ltd.  
East African Portland Cement  
East African Storage Co. Ltd.  
Ecological Safari Co.  
Elzenga, J.W.  
Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society  
Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation  
Ewell, Mr. & Mrs. Harry.  
Fairway Hotel (Uganda)  
Firestone (E.A.) 1969 Ltd.  
Food & Agricultural Organisation (Nairobi)  
Food & Agricultural Organisation (Accra)  
Four Seasons Travel  
Friends of Conservation

Feibjrghaus, E.F.  
Fritidsbus Temaesor  
Fun Tours and Safaris Limited  
Gajjar, M.M.  
Gametrackers (K) Ltd.  
Garcia I. Garcia  
Groth, Wolfgang  
Gruy, R.H.  
Guerba (K) Ltd.  
Gunter Bolte  
Hartsfield J.W.  
Henniges A.  
Hillcrest Secondary School  
Hilton International  
Highways Tours & Safaris  
Hovmand Anne Bolette  
Intensive Care Air Ambulance  
International Distillers (K) Ltd.  
International School of Tanganyika  
Isler, H.H.  
Japan Int. Co-operation Agency  
Jet Travel Ltd.  
Kakira Sugar Works (Kampala)  
Kapi Ltd.  
Katatumba, B.  
Kensta  
Kenya Airways  
Kenya Beach Hotel  
Kenya Breweries Ltd.  
Kenya Institute of Tourism  
Kibo Safaris EA (TZ) Ltd.  
Kilimanjaro Safari Club  
Kobil Petroleum Ltd.  
Kobo Safaris  
Kumuka Expeditions  
Kuoni Travel Ltd.  
Leisure Lodges Ltd.  
Let's Go Travel  
Library Museum of Comparative Zoology  
Lloyd Masika Ltd.  
Lonrho Hotels (K) Ltd.  
Mayfair Court  
Micato Safaris  
Mombasa Academy

Monsanto Central African Inc.  
Motor Mart Group Ltd.  
Mpata Investments Limited  
Murere Educational Centre  
Mwaka Wildlife College  
Nairobi Educational Centre  
Nairobi Safari Club  
National Industrial Credit Ltd.  
National Environmental Secretariat  
National Outdoor Leadership School  
Nolan-Neylan K.  
Offbeat Safaris Limited  
Oserian Development Co. Ltd.  
Patel, Dr. A. R.  
Payless Car Hire and Tours Ltd.  
Perry Mason Safaris Ltd.  
Photomap (K) Ltd.  
Piglia Vanzetti M  
Pollman's Tours & Safaris Ltd.  
Pouw, J.G.  
Prestige Hotel Ltd.  
Prestige Safaris Ltd.  
Private Safaris (EA) Ltd.  
Private Safaris Zurich  
Provincial Insurance Co. of EA Ltd.  
Pyles Lumber Co Inc.  
Rajair Travel & Tours  
Rhea, Dr.M.J.  
Rhino Leisure and Safari  
Rhone-Poulenc Kenya Ltd.  
Roode, J.B.  
Roy Safaris Ltd.  
Ruia R.R.  
Safari Beach Hotel  
Sadolin Paints Ltd.  
Safaris Unlimited (A) Ltd.  
Sarit Centre  
Saunders, R.B.  
Savuka Tours and Safaris  
Stephan, R.  
St. Lawrence University  
Scorpio Enterprises Ltd.  
Serengeti Safari Lodges Ltd.

Severin Sea Lodge  
Shelly Beach Hotel  
Shell Uganda Ltd.  
Sheraton Hotel (Uganda)  
Sise Company Ltd.  
Solio Ranch Ltd.  
Sona Industries Ltd.  
Southern Cross Safaris Ltd.  
Stanbic Bank (Uganda) Ltd.  
Sun 'n' Sand Beach Hotel  
Symbion International  
Tamarind Management  
Tanapa Community  
Conservation Services  
Terjersen, B.  
Textbook Centre Ltd.  
Textprint Ltd.  
The Ark  
The New Vision (Uganda)  
The Paper House of Kenya Ltd.  
Transworld Safaris Ltd.  
Tropical Escapes Ltd.  
Tsavo Educational Centre  
UNIGHIR Ltd.  
United Finance Ltd.  
United Insurance Ltd.  
United Millers Ltd.  
United Touring Company Ltd.  
University of Nairobi Library  
Valla, M.  
Van Den Abbeele De Nil  
Van Leer East Africa Ltd.  
Voyage Specializer  
Walbot, B.M.  
Walt Disney Imagineering  
Webb, J.H. Jr.  
Wienand, M.P.  
Wildlife Safari - (Kenya)  
Williamson (K) Ltd.  
Worldin Tours and Travel Ltd.  
Worldwide Adventure Travel  
Yare Safaris Company Ltd.

# East African Wild Life Society Representatives Worldwide

## ARGENTINA

Miguel A. Tausig  
Av Libertador 17066  
1 643 Beccar  
PCIA BUENOS AIRES

## AUSTRALIA

Stephen Cameron  
1st Floor 259 Coventry Street  
South Melbourne 3205

## VICTORIA

A. B. Steel (Geoff)  
P.O. Box 703  
South Perth and 3/33 Park St.,  
Como South Perth 5152

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ralph B. Tyrell  
Flaxton Mill Road, Montville,  
QUEENSLAND 4560

## AUSTRIA

Hans Norbert Rois  
Uhrlplatz 5/8  
A-1080 WIEN

## BELGIUM

John Rowland  
11 Rue Faider  
1050 BRUSSELS

## Robby Bolleyn

Dascottelei 95 Bus 7  
B-2100 Dcume  
ANTWERPEN

## CANADA

Robert R. Taylor  
944 Windermere Ave  
Winnipeg  
MANITOBA R3T 1A1

## Lisa Corewyn

87 Woodstone Avenue  
Richmond Hill  
ONTARIO L4S 1B6

## DENMARK

Bo Finn Poulsen  
Worsaaevj 21972  
FREDRIKS BERG O

## EGYPT

James Dinsmore  
Director,  
Sinai Wildlife Projects,  
SHARM EL-SHEIKH

## FINLAND

Tom Kumlin  
Munkkivuonokuta 6A3  
SF-02160 ESTOO

## GREAT BRITAIN

David Keith Jones  
11 The Windings  
LICHFIELD WS13 7EX  
Primrose Stubbs

## Sloane Square House

LONDON SW1X9LU  
Andrew C. Fentiman  
83 Gloucester Place  
LONDON W1H 3PG

## Mr & Mrs Gill

Grass Roots Travel Ltd  
8 Lindsay Road  
Hampton Hill  
MIDDLESEX

## GERMANY

Wolfgang Doring  
Am Tarpencue 55  
D-22848 NORDERSTEDT

## Klaus Fenger

Zugspitzstr 65  
82467 GARMISCH -  
PARTENKIRCHEN

## Rolf Weber

Dieselsstr. 67  
D-42719 SOLINGEN - WALD

## Jutta & Dirk Ohlerich

Schutzbaumstrasse 50  
D-63073 OFFENBACH

## Paolo P. Sepe

Screngeti Safari Park  
29693 HODENHAGEN

## GREECE

Solomon Githinji  
6 Tychis St.  
ATHENS 11253

## HOLLAND

Johan W. Elzenga  
Burg Verhullean 59  
2396 EP Koudekerk  
A/D RIJN

## IRELAND

Kieran & Carmiel Moyal  
6 Beverley, Ovens,  
Co. CORK

## David Bockett

30 Zion Road,  
Rathgar  
DUBLIN 6

## ISRAEL

Abed Azab  
P O Box 231  
Am 30025

## ITALY

Nicolas Giorgini  
Via Pietro Calvi 19  
20129 MILANO

## JAPAN

Mustuo Tsukazaki  
2-6-11 Shibuya Shibuya-Ku  
TOKYO 150

## KENYA

Mark Easterbrook  
P O Box 208  
MALINDI

## Mr Suthar Kiran

P O Box 1000  
MERU

## MEXICO

Mr & Mrs Enrique Mondragon

Pancho  
Coahuila No 603  
CELAYA GTO

## NEW ZEALAND

Bruce Gardiner

33 Willoughby  
St PAEROA

## NORWAY

J. E. Johnsen  
Munkedvelen 41 A  
OSLO 1 1

## SOUTH AFRICA

Ian Skilling  
c/o Department of Geology,  
Rhodes University,  
P O Box 94,  
6140 GRAHAMSTOWN

## SPAIN

Lidia Sanchez Ruzgales

c/o Nutria 26  
La Moralega  
28109

## SWEDEN

Hugo Berch

Kungsgatan  
261 31 LANDSKRONA

## Dag Peterson

Pt. 3550, Salgtsered  
S - 51020 FRITSLA

## SWITZERLAND

Anton-Pieter Duffhuis

Rutistrasse 5  
8903 Birrnsdorf-Waldegg

## Therese and Bernhard Sorgen

Erlenward 30  
8302 Klotten

## TANZANIA

John Vincent Bennett

P O Box 1410  
MOSHI

Mr & Mrs Olson Petterson

P O Box 458  
MOSHI

## U.A.E.

E. A. Sheppard

P O Box 6000  
DUBAI

## U.S.A.

Keith Tucker

Chief American Rep.  
P O Box 82002  
San Diego  
CALIFORNIA 92138

Trevor Fernandes

346 Rheem Boulevard  
Monga  
CALIFORNIA 94556

R. Simmon

4705 North 68th Place  
Scottsdale  
ARIZONA 85251

Cheryl S. Kuck

2332 Village Green Blvd  
Plant City  
FLORIDA 33566

Michael Banks

1054 Kane Concourse  
Bay Harbour Islands  
FLORIDA 33154

Lawrence A. Wilson

3727 Summitridge Drive,  
Atlanta  
GEORGIA 30340

Gordon Crombie

2725 Park Ave, Franklin Park  
ILLINOIS 60131

Sanford Takiff

P O Box 546  
Highland Park  
ILLINOIS 60035

Isabelle Linklater

Assisi Animal Foundation  
P O Box 143, Crystal Lake  
ILLINOIS 60039-0143

Gary K. Clarke

Private Bag 4863  
Gage Centre Station, Topoka  
KANSAS 66604 - 0408

## C. G. Allen Jr

Barre 01005  
MASSACHUSETTS

Ronald Bergman

13 Briarwood Road  
Frammingham 01701  
MASSACHUSETTS

Mr & Mrs Harry Ewell

200 Lyell Avenue,  
Spencerport,  
NEW YORK 14559-1839

Barbara Meyers

29 Lyman Avenue  
Staten Island  
NEW YORK 10305

Peter Bakker

175 West 79 St # 1 OE  
NEW YORK

Melanie Mehlenbacher

PO Box 430  
Trumansburg  
NEW YORK 14886

Tel: 607-387-6292

Fax: 607-367-7538

George F. Rooss

61 Forest Ridge Drive  
Worthington  
OHIO 43235

Neil M. Krebsbach

7875 Strawberry Hill Lane  
Maineville  
OHIO 45039

Evelyn Bloom

1067 NE Cochran Dr  
Gresham  
OREGON 97030

James Archer

855 Springdale Drive  
Eston  
PENNSYLVANIA 19341

Grant and Barbara Winther

11771 Sunset Ave N.E.  
Bainbridge Island  
WASHINGTON 98110

ZANZIBAR

Rebecca Browning

Zanbro Travel Consultants  
P O Box 152

ZIMBABWE

M. R. Drury

35 Cecil Rhodes Ave  
Highlands  
HARARE

## Features:

### Insight:

7 The Maasai Mara is part of Maasai heritage and should remain theirs to manage, argues *Hon. Samson ole Tuya, Member of Parliament for Narok South*.

### Safari:

9 Wild water and wildlife abound in Ethiopia's Awash National Park, reports *Joe Cheffings*.

### Horizons:

11 Rwandan gorilla protectors get an international prize; Satellite tracking comes to Kori bustards; East African ecosystems get a closer look.

### Profile:

13 John Waithaka, Kenya Wildlife Service's Elephant Programme Coordinator, is not afraid to speak his mind. By *David Simpson*.

### Life in the Wild:

24 A project in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda, may cast new light on worldwide bird migrations. *Lou Bergeron* reports.

25 It was bad enough thinking there are only 620 mountain gorillas remaining in the world. Now new data compiled by researcher *Esteban Sarmiento* suggests the true number may be 320.

26 It may be too late for the Maasai Mara's wild dogs, observes *Nigel Dougherty*, but in southern Kenya's arid Kajiado region, the signs are more promising.

30 Laikipia Wildlife Forum could be a new model for community conservation, argues *Sacha Cook*.

### Media Reviews:

32 *Whose Eden?* The Society's vice-president, *Mwamba Shete*, takes a look at the British Overseas Development Agency's overview of community approaches to wildlife management.

33 *Echo: The Next Generation*. Cinematographer *Martyn Colbeck* and elephant behaviourist *Cynthia Moss* bring us the sequel to *Echo of the Elephants*. Review by *Louisa Lockwood*.

### Project Update:

34 A new translocation program spells hope for the hirola antelope, says *Richard Kock*.

### Society Highlights:

35 EAWLS Forest Forum.

### The Last Word:

36 Readers' letters

## The Maasai Mara

14 The Maasai Mara is probably Kenya's most famous treasure. It is crucial to the country's tourist industry and, as recently published data show, it is home to a disproportionate number of Kenya's wildlife. On top of that it is an essential part of the Serengeti ecosystem - a machine we still only barely understand - host to an annual massive wildebeest migration, one of the wonders of the world. Recently, controversy over the Maasai Mara's management and future has dominated all reports from the area. **Whose Heritage Is It?** asks *Ken Opala*, a Nairobi-based investigative reporter.

17 Other than being there, there is only one way to truly appreciate **The Magic of the Mara**. A pictorial from *Rick Edwards*, one of Kenya's leading wildlife photographers.

21 There is more to life in the Mara than commonly meets the eye, says *Wolfgang Braunstein*. He brings us **The Secret Life of Mara Flowers**.

22 Canine distemper virus contributed to the death of the Maasai Mara's wild dogs. Then it spread to the Mara's cats. However, in **Mara Lions Weather Distemper Virus**, *Lou Bergeron* brings us some welcome good news.

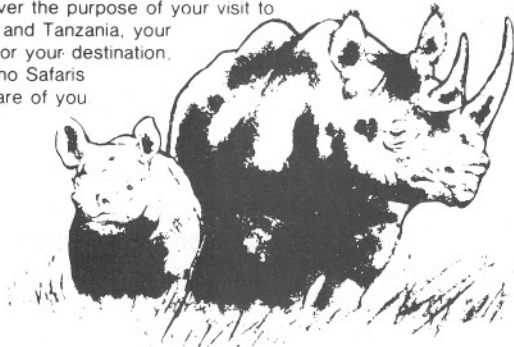
23 Tourists and predators already bedevil cheetahs' lives, so they can well do without poachers' snares, says *Wolfgang Braunstein*, reporting on **The Cruel End of a Cheetah Partnership**.

# Your Gateway to Adventure

Operating out of Nairobi in Kenya — the major jumping-off point for all safaris in Kenya and Tanzania — Rhino Safaris Limited, with the assured knowledge based on years of experience, provides the one-day excursion or ten-day safari that will meet your own exacting requirements

We have built up a comprehensive transport fleet of buses and cars, self-drive or chauffeur driven, in an organisation geared to cope not only with our own very wide variety of scheduled tours, but also with specialised requirements of both large groups and the individual

Whatever the purpose of your visit to Kenya and Tanzania, your route, or your destination, let Rhino Safaris take care of you



Nairobi, Nairobi Hilton Bldg, PO Box 48023, Nairobi.  
Tel 228102 225419 332372/3, Telex 22801 Rhinocamp, Fax 338427.  
Mombasa, Rhino Building, Nyerere Avenue, PO Box 83050, Mombasa.  
Tel 311755 311141, Fax 315743.  
Arusha, (Tanzania) Kudu Safari Ltd, Ngorongoro Building, Suite 215 AICC.  
Tel 057 8193/6065.  
London, (England) 9 Galena Road, Hammersmith, London W6 0LX.  
Tel 081 7415333, Telex 912037 Mrig., Fax 081 7419030.  
Milan, (Italy) Torre Velasca, 20122 Milan.  
Tel 864 63062 8646 2272, Telex 310585 Rinomi, Fax 863453.

# Bowland Ward's



## BIG GAME HAND ENGRAVED CRYSTAL

INCLUDING  
BIG GAME FISH SERIES

Please write to us for our illustrated catalogue (VI) which consists of our range of crystalware along with our prices.

**ROWLAND WARDS**

P.O. Box 40991, NAIROBI, KENYA TEL: 225509, FAX: 218154  
On Standard Street behind the New Stanley next to Lonrho House

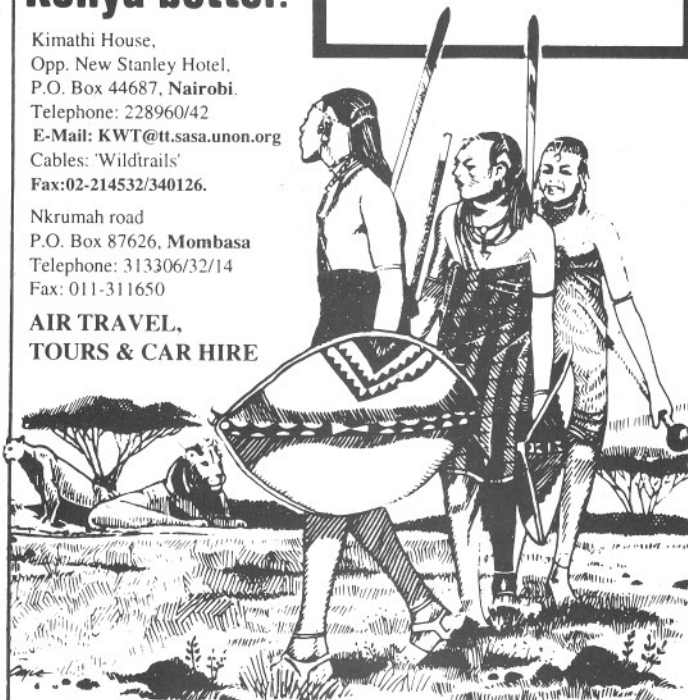
Follow the trail with us.  
The people who know Kenya better.



Kimathi House,  
Opp. New Stanley Hotel,  
P.O. Box 44687, Nairobi.  
Telephone: 228960/42  
E-Mail: KWT@tt.sasa.unon.org  
Cables: 'Wildtrails'  
Fax: 02-214532/340126.

Nkrumah road  
P.O. Box 87626, Mombasa  
Telephone: 313306/32/14  
Fax: 011-311650

**AIR TRAVEL,  
TOURS & CAR HIRE**



Black and white is good...



...but bring your colour film!

**Bushbuck Adventures** are specialists in real adventure photographic safaris. Expert guides to give you their personal attention; 4-wheel drive vehicles to get you to areas of great natural beauty and interest at a leisurely pace; private and secluded camps; professional safari cooks, they all combine to make your safari the safari of a lifetime. Send now for details.

**Our personal attention is guaranteed**

**Bushbuck Adventures**

*Leaders in Ecotourism*

Bushbuck Adventures Ltd, P.O. Box 67449, Nairobi, Kenya  
Telephone: (254-2) 212975/6, 218478(O) 521554(H)  
Fax: (254-2) 218735/212977 Telex: 22992Hosecs



**Insight:**

# Let the Maasai Keep the Mara

*says the Hon. Samson ole Tuya, MP for Narok South*

**T**HE MAASAI MARA NATIONAL Reserve has developed from small beginnings to become the most important and most visited wildlife area in Kenya. It is important as a permanent wildlife sanctuary where you will find animals all year round; it is important to Kenya's tourism industry; and it is important to we Maasai of Narok District. It is especially important to us all as living evidence of our commitment to preserve the Maasai Mara, its wildlife and habitats, for our children, our grandchildren, and indeed for all future generations.

The Maasai have always lived with animals. They not only tolerate them, but accept them as part of nature, of God's gift to mankind, and we have never seen any reason to kill them - either for food or any other reason. Hunting by traditional warriors was limited and never constituted a threat to any species' existence.

In 1948, the area we call the Mara Triangle, to the west of the Mara River, was declared a National Game Reserve by the colonial government. In that area, no shooting was permitted. Remember that in those far-off days the only visitors who came to this country wanted to hunt. The area we now know as the National Reserve was designated later as a no-shooting area and only photography was permitted. In 1961, we agreed to the creation of the present reserve by extending the boundaries beyond the eastern side of the Mara River to what it is today. Since 1961, there have been minor adjustments to the boundaries to cater for the needs of both the people and the wildlife.

In 1962, Narok County Council built a number of self-catering bandas on the site of what is today Keekorok Lodge. In 1965, the Council made an agreement with Block Hotels to build and develop a lodge which was opened by His Excellency Jomo Kenyatta, the first President of the Republic of Kenya.

In the early 1970s, when the border with our neighbour, Tanzania, was closed, it became clear that more accommodation was needed in the reserve to cater for the

increasingly large number of visitors. Between 1970 and 1980 three more lodges *cum* camps were built in the reserve and five on the group ranches that border the reserve.

As Kenya's tourism industry developed, more people came to this country on safari. It became clear that still more accommodation was essential if the Mara was to play a full part in the development of the nation by supporting tourism, our largest foreign currency earner. Thus today\*, we have a total of six camps or lodges within the reserve and ten

**'Wildlife deserves to be protected for its own sake. The animals are God's creatures...'**

on the bordering group ranches. Many people will say that this is too many, that we offer too many beds, that there are too many vehicles and people and that the Mara has lost its charm and privacy. We do not agree. We permitted development because we believed it was acceptable to the environment and to the use of wildlife and because it was compatible with development plans for Narok District as a whole.

The Maasai Mara National Reserve is the base upon which Narok County Council is able to provide service and development to the people including education, veterinary and health services and water. It must be understood that Narok is a rapidly developing district. Improved education is bringing young people with an increased knowledge and awareness of good agricultural practices and stock rearing methods. We have a population increasing perhaps faster than we wish, but we must recognise that this is happening and act accordingly. There is a body of opinion which says that the council does not reinvest enough of the money it earns from the Mara back into the reserve. That criticism is justified.

We cannot look at the Maasai Mara National Reserve in isolation. It is part and parcel of Narok District and should benefit the people. The group ranches, which provide habitat for many thousands of animals throughout the year, now directly receive a proportion of the money raised from reserve entrance fees. Perhaps this is a small reward for their tolerance and the disruption caused to those who wish to farm properly and profitably. The Maasai Mara is an integral part of the economic framework of Narok District. Its contribution is immense and, in turn, the council looks after it to ensure its survival and attraction. Since the whole reserve was placed under the direct control of Narok County Council in 1961, we have managed it and administered it. Looking at the deterioration over the past twenty years of other wildlife areas and National Parks in Kenya, I think our record of administration compares very favourably with any park or reserve in this country.

Let me assure you that our commitment to the preservation of wildlife and habitat in the Maasai Mara Reserve is total. We do not deny that the reserve is of vital economic importance to us, but we also firmly believe, and proclaim, that wildlife deserves to be protected for its own sake. The animals are God's creatures, and we affirm their right to live and survive as undisturbed as possible in this busy and overpopulated world. The Mara can provide a relief from the commercial pressures of profit and survival. We must emphasise that in the Maasai Mara Reserve, the interests of wildlife are paramount. ❧

*\* This article was originally presented as the keynote speech to a 1991 workshop on Mara tourism organised by Wildlife Conservation International when Mr. ole Tuya was chairman of Narok County Council. A booklet entitled *Tourist Attitudes and Use Impacts in the Maasai Mara*, published by WCI and edited by C.G. Gakahu is available from WCI, P.O. Box 62844, Nairobi, Kenya.*

# Safaris Unlimited

(AFRICA) LTD



25 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL  
& DEPENDABLE SERVICE

LUXURY ADVENTURE SAFARIS • HORSEBACK SAFARIS  
FIELD SPORTS • AIR CHARTERS • COAST HOLIDAYS

WE ALSO MANAGE LONGONOT RANCH HOUSE, NAIVASHA  
& CHELSON HOUSE, MSAMBWENI, SOUTH COAST

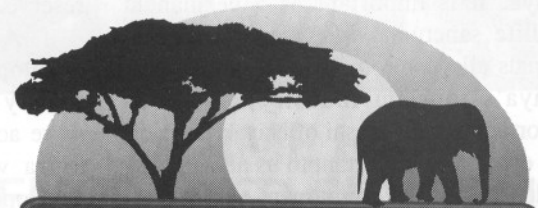


PO BOX 24181, NAIROBI, KENYA TEL: (254 2) 891168 OR 890435 FAX: (254 2) 891113 TELEX: 22380 ENLITEN

## TANZANIA

- ENJOY THE QUIET DISCOVERY OF NATURE ONLY AN EXPERTLY MANAGED SAFARI CAN BRING
  - EXPERIENCE TANZANIA IN UNPRETENTIOUS STYLE WITH MODERN SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE
  - EXPLORE TANZANIA'S FABULOUS GAME PARKS AND REMOTE WILDERNESS ON FOOT AND IN LANDROVERS
- ACCOMMODATIONS IN MOBILE CAMPS AND INTIMATE LODGES  
FULL BOARD DAILY, WITH BEVERAGES INCLUDED  
PROFESSIONAL, EXPERIENCED GUIDES AND SKILLED CAMP CREW  
TANZANIA ADVENTURE / 10-day TANZANIA DISCOVERY / 13-day  
THE ESSENTIAL SAFARI / 10-day

GUARANTEED SCHEDULED DEPARTURES - CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMS



**ECOLOGICAL SAFARI CO.**

NEW YORK • TANGANYIKA  
Call 212-986-6679, Fx 212-338-9066, or  
Write 138 E. 38th St./Ste. 9-C, NYC NY 10016  
The ECOLOGICAL SAFARI CO. enrolls each  
passenger in the East African Wildlife Society

# The Big Six



- Against a multitude of tour operators in East Africa, UTC stands out.
- A tour operator committed to delivering the best value and service to its customers.
- A tour operator with over 50 years of experience with a vision and expertise which

keeps us at the forefront of today's competitive market.

- So if you're thinking of a safari in Kenya or Tanzania, talk to the people who know East Africa best.
- Talk to UTC.

**UTC**

*The very Best - for less*

# Awash National Park

**Wild water and abundant wildlife are two attractions of this Ethiopian park, says Joe Cheffings.**

**L**OCATED APPROXIMATELY 220 KILOMETRES east of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, Awash National Park covers an area of 800 square kilometres (300 square miles). Lying astride the main Addis Ababa to Assab highway, it is connected to the capital city by a good Tarmac road.

The park is situated in Ethiopia's Rift Valley at an altitude of around 900 metres (3,000 feet) above sea level. Its terrain is typical of the dry savannah habitats of north-eastern Africa: rocky, scenic and arid. Much of the vegetation is dense *Acacia* bush broken up by open, grassy areas. The north-west of the park is dominated by Mount Fantale, a 2,000-metre (6,500 foot) dormant volcano, which last erupted in 1820.

In the southern region are extensive grasslands bordered by the Awash Valley. Here the ground drops steeply away down rocky slopes to the Awash River, 800 feet below. The river forms the southeastern border of the park.

On the open grassland, Beisa oryx and Soemmerrings gazelle are common, while greater and lesser kudu inhabit the more bushy places. Salt's dikdik and wart hog are also numerous. In the gallery forest along the river you will see waterbuck, colobus monkeys, Ethiopian grivet monkeys and olive baboons. The river itself harbours crocodiles.

Whilst camped beside the Awash in early March 1996, I saw the tracks of lion and hyaena. This riverine campsite, shaded by ficus and tamarind trees is very attractive, but remember the crocodiles - do not battle in the river beside the camp! The camp is also spoiled somewhat by the boldness of the baboons and grivet monkeys. Their forays have to be constantly guarded against. Bird life is prolific. Abyssinian rollers, white rumped babblers, curly crested helmet shrikes, lanner falcons, various herons, plovers, pigeons, doves, woodpeckers, barbets and sunbirds are all seen.

A few hundred metres from the campsite are the park headquarters, close to the spectacular Awash water falls. If you are lucky enough, as I was, to be in camp there when the moon is nearly full, be sure to ask your guide to walk with you to the foot of the falls after supper. The stunning volume of water cascading over the falls under a bright moon is a vision of elemental nature not to be missed.



The pool below the falls is the starting point of a twenty-eight kilometre (seventeen mile) white water rafting route. Depending on the water level, running this section of the river in a rugged Avon inflatable boat takes between six and eight hours including a picnic lunch stop. There are numerous rapids, especially during the early part of the trip. The 800-foot rocky slopes of the gorge are impressive and in the narrow strip of riverine woodland colobus and grivet monkeys will be seen. Baboons are plentiful and the occasional crocodile will be glimpsed as he slips into the water. Further downstream the lower slopes of the gorge crowd in on the river and form vertical cliffs. As the boat passes through this narrow canyon klipspringers may be observed close to the water.

Regarding the future of the park it appears to be an ideal habitat for gerenuk, reticulated giraffe and Grevy's zebra, none of which are said to currently exist there. Perhaps efforts could be made to reintroduce them. The Ethiopian people should be proud of the Grevy's (or Menelik's) zebra, as the first one to be seen in Europe was a gift to President Grevy of France from Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia.

Further information can be obtained from the excellent *Spectrum Guide to Ethiopia* by Camerapix, Nairobi.

**'The stunning volume of water cascading over the falls is a vision of elemental nature not to be missed'**

*Photograph:  
Joe Cheffings*

*A frequent contributor to Swara, Joe Cheffings runs Bateleur Safaris.*

A SPECIAL PLACE TO STAY FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE

**THE GIRAFFE MANOR**  
THERE'S ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD  
NAIROBI, KENYA

The Giraffe Manor Ltd., PO Box 45004, Langata, Nairobi, Kenya Tel: (254-2) 891078, Fax: (254-2) 890949

TURKANA TRUCK SAFARIS

TANZANIA & UGANDA SAFARIS

FOOT SAFARIS · CAMEL TREKKING · MOUNTAIN BIKE SAFARIS

## ADVENTURES IN AFRICA

Gametrackers safaris are designed for those in search of real adventure, who enjoy the unpredictable and who want to get away from the well travelled tourist tracks.

The open African plains where you can see forever, star filled night vistas, animals in the wild and an expert safari cook – experience the real Africa.

**Gametrackers**  
Leaders in Camping and Lodge Safaris in Kenya  
PO Box 62042 Nairobi Kenya  
1st Floor, Kenya Cinema Plaza, Moi Avenue  
Tel: 338927, 222703, 212830/1/2, Telex: 22258 Tracker, Fax: 330903

CANOE SAFARIS · MOUNTAINEERING SAFARIS · GORILLA SAFARIS



## SPECTRUM

COLOUR LAB LTD

FINEST QUALITY PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ TWO HOURS E6 PROCESSING</li> <li>■ EXHIBITION PRINTS</li> <li>■ HAND PRINTS</li> <li>■ DURATANS</li> <li>■ DUPES</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ BLACK &amp; WHITE</li> <li>■ DRY MOUNTING</li> <li>■ LAMINATION</li> <li>■ CANVAS</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



Standard Street, P.O. Box 20107 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: 219757 • Fax: 337797

## Paul Getty Prize Goes to Rwandan Gorilla Guards

THIS YEAR'S J. PAUL GETTY WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PRIZE, awarded by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF-USA), went to the staff of the Parc National des Volcans and their conservation partners for their outstanding courage and dedication in safeguarding the endangered mountain gorilla during and after the recent tragic Rwandan civil war of 1994.

One of the most prestigious awards for significant achievement in wildlife and wild lands conservation, the Getty Prize was created in 1974 by the late J. Paul Getty. A previous winner from Africa was Dr. Jane Goodall.

The prize was awarded collectively on May 28 to the staff of the Office Rwandaise du Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux (ORTPN) for their direct contribution to the conservation of the Parc National des Volcans, one of the afro-montane habitats of the mountain gorilla, of which only about 620 remain in the world (see page 25). About half the population is found in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda. The other half lives in the Virunga Mountains straddling the borders of Uganda, Rwanda and Zaire.

The award will be given to ORTPN staff through the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP), a coalition of WWF-International, the African Wildlife Foundation and Flora and Flora International. IGCP works in partnership with other NGOs, local governments and donor agencies in all three countries.

Since 1991, IGCP has supported gorilla conservation in Rwanda through staff training, funding park patrols and mine clearing operations, environmental awareness programmes and providing equipment, rations and field allowances.

Some of the \$50,000 cash award will be shared between 67 people, while a portion will be used to buy much-needed field equipment for their work in the park.

Award recipients included ORTPN park guards, guides, wardens and administrative staff. Also rewarded were members of the Rwandan army mine clearing team, the community at Kinigi and staff at Parc National des Volcans headquarters, where the awards ceremony was held.

## East African Ecosystems Get a Closer Look

PUBLISHED IN NEW YORK IN JULY, AND available in Nairobi from early August, *East African Ecosystems and their Conservation* is the first attempt to present under one title a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ecosystems of East Africa. Edited by T.R. McClanahan and T.P. Young and published by Oxford University Press, it includes sections on marine ecosystems; inland water ecosystems; grass, shrub and woodland ecosystems; and forest ecosystems. Each ecosystem's component parts gets a look and the role of people, both positive and negative, within that system is underscored in every chapter. Over ten percent of the cover price goes to EAWLS.

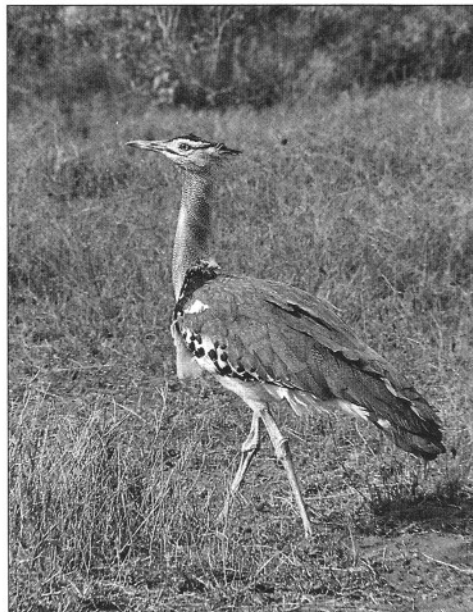
## Kori Bustard Study Comes to Kenya

THE NATIONAL AVIAN RESEARCH CENTRE (NARC) of the United Arab Emirates and the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) announced in June a cooperative effort to study the movement of the kori bustard using satellite transmitters. The project's Kenyan coordinator is Peter Njoroge of NMK's Department of Ornithology.

With males often weighing over 11 kilograms, the kori bustard is among the heaviest of the world's flying birds. East Africa is home to several bustard species, some of which are in decline. Ecologists fear that the distribution of kori bustards in Kenya is becoming fragmented.

NARC has developed tracking technology which it successfully used in 1995 to track a houbara bustard on its northerly migration from its wintering grounds in the U.A.E. to its breeding grounds in Central Asia. This year, NARC satellite-tracked nine houbara bustards on their southerly migration route.

According to Dr. Frederic Launay, NARC's head of ecology, NARC's expertise and technology should help Kenyan ecologists gain a better understanding of the kori's movements around Kenya. "This knowledge should enable us to make recommendations on areas of the country that need particular protection."



### Kori Bustard

Photograph:  
Michael Gore

# Wrestling With Elephants

**Meet John Waithaka, Kenya Wildlife Service's straight-talking Elephant Programme Coordinator. *By David Simpson.***

**I**T TAKES A SPECIAL TYPE OF PERSON TO be willing to stand out from the crowd. John Waithaka, Kenya Wildlife Service's Elephant Programme Coordinator, is such a man. Back in May, he woke up an audience at a Kenyan forestry forum with his forthright comments. Reacting to the announcement of new policies for protecting Kenya's forests, his comments went straight to the heart of the matter. Kenya has policies on many things, he said. For example, road safety. Yet the carnage on

Kenya's roads is still increasing. The country also has a policy on forests. Yet supposedly protected woodlands continue to be damaged by illicit tree felling and appropriated for development. What is needed, he proclaimed, isn't new policies, but real commitment to existing policies.

Waithaka has been standing up and speaking out about what he believes in for as long as he can remember. Brought up on the slopes of the Aberdares when wildlife was simply seen as the enemy of the farmer and the preserve of colonialists, John was alone in his family to feel an empathy with the wild creatures which shared the land.

"My parents and the people in my village were very negative towards wildlife," he recalls. "It was appalling to me. When I first saw an elephant, aged 13, I was deeply moved. The elephant had just come out of the forest and the people were trying to spear it and drive it back." It was then that he realised that he felt a close relation to the wildlife around him, despite the resentment felt by his family. "I grew up wanting to know why there was that kind of resentment."

That curiosity drove Waithaka through school and university, where he studied zoology and then the biology of conservation for an M.Sc. and a subsequent Ph.D. under the supervision of the current director of KWS, Dr. David Western. In January 1995, shortly after completing his doctorate, he joined KWS.

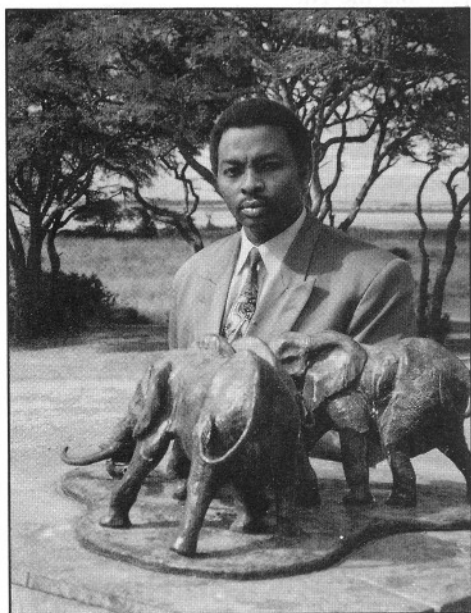
Waithaka has had a lot of opportunity since his early years to discover the extent of, and the reasons for, the rural population's resentment towards wildlife in general and elephants in particular. The roots of that resentment go back to colonial times, he says. "Back in the 1950s, colonial rule was harsh on the people who went into the forests to collect herbs for medicines. People's attitude was: The forest is there for us to use but we cannot. If we try to use it we are punished, so any animal coming from there onto our land will be punished."

These days, conflict between people and wildlife has been enormously exacerbated by Kenya's rapid population growth. What was once sparsely populated country has become dense with people, and areas once teeming with wildlife have been given over to uses, like intensive farming, which are incompatible with wildlife conservation. As Waithaka sees it: "Human-wildlife conflict is so severe today that unless we do something now - something positive - wildlife is endangered."

Since the 1970s, Kenya has closely monitored its changing resources. Recent statistics show that seventy five percent of Kenya's wildlife lives outside protected areas. The same statistics also show that in the past twenty years, Kenya has lost between thirty and fifty percent of the wildlife living outside its parks and reserves. The main contributors to that decline are poaching and loss of habitat. And the reason is that the majority of Kenya's people see no benefit in conserving wildlife.

The only way to arrest the slide towards wildlife oblivion, Waithaka maintains, is to involve the people who live outside the protected areas, on whose lands the wildlife feeds, in conservation. "People have been the problem. They will be the solution. But the only way is if they become beneficiaries of conservation. I strongly believe that economic benefit is a strong incentive to conserve. Those areas where community-based wildlife conservation projects are bringing economic benefits to the people - like in Laikipia, Amboseli, Kwale District and the Maasai Mara - people are seeing wildlife not as a problem but as an asset." It is no coincidence, he says, that sixty percent of Kenya's rhinos are in Laikipia. "Most people there benefit from wildlife."

The automatic assumption of many is that wildlife benefits only come from tourist dollars. Not so,



**John Waithaka: Responsible for Kenya's elephants since January 1995.**

*Photograph: D. Simpson*

Waithaka points out. Other forms of utilisation can be extremely profitable. For instance, the number of places where tourists and residents alike can enjoy a steak of gazelle or impala is growing. However, at least one species presents Kenya as a whole, and John Waithaka in particular, with a huge conservation headache. Elephants. Since the CITES ban on the ivory trade and Kenya's intensive anti-poaching wars of the 1980s, the fortunes of the earth's largest mammals have taken a turn for the better. But not without causing some new problems. Again, the issue is human-wildlife conflict.

"Those who carried the message of the elephant abroad from Kenya and elsewhere did not tell the whole story," Waithaka says. "This is why we are in such a crisis situation today. They said that elephants are wonderful. They said that they have feelings like humans, they live long lives, they have wonderful memories, they are manipulators of the environment, they contribute to biodiversity enhancement, they bury their dead. All these things are true. But they didn't tell the whole story. They didn't say that elephants have such a strong impact on their habitat and on people that unless we look at both the positive and the negative aspects of the elephant, we shall not be able to ensure the survival of this animal."

The elephant has been given such a high international profile in recent years that, to an extent, Waithaka and people like him across the continent charged with the protection and preservation of the elephant, have their hands tied. The question is one of control. Suitable elephant habitat, especially in the forested mountain areas where human populations are high, is dwindling, yet elephant populations are rising. Culling is not currently an option in Kenya and even in Southern Africa it is being called into question. But what are the alternatives? Effective contraceptive measures have not yet been developed and relocation, depending on the terrain, ranges from expensive to impossible. Meanwhile, as human and elephant populations rise, conflict increases.

In 1995, Waithaka's office received over 3,000 elephant complaints. "Elephants kill more people than all the other wildlife species in Kenya put together," he notes. "Also, elephants do a lot of damage to crops. An elephant is able to eat 2,200 kilos of vegetation a day. Imagine a herd of elephants that has invaded a shamba. They just clear everything. And because of their size, they compact the soil so you can't then till it with traditional hoes."

It is Waithaka's job to deal with Kenya's growing elephant problem. "Many people tell me that my job is very difficult because there is no decision that I will make that will please everybody," he says. "The problems are such that unless we find ways of solving them, we cannot ensure the survival of elephants. It will not matter how people in Europe and America perceive them. The survival of elephants will not depend on money from the World Bank or big donor organisations. The survival of elephants will depend on the people who share their land with them."

There are two approaches to viable solutions,

Waithaka thinks, depending on where elephants are found. The first scenario is in areas like Mounts Elgon and Kenya and the Aberdares. Maybe half of Kenya's elephants live in mountain areas, and their habitat is being steadily squeezed since the mountain areas are also the most suitable for agriculture. "There are some land uses which are totally incompatible with elephant conservation," he notes. "Agriculture is one. So, if we must have elephants in the Aberdares and Mount Kenya, we must put a barrier between the areas of conservation and farming. However, by solving one problem, we create another. If we confine elephants to small areas, we prevent them from moving and we exert a lot of pressure on their habitat. We see a lot of vegetation destruction and forested habitats changing into bush or open grasslands. This is not acceptable because these areas are also very important water catchment areas. This water catchment function must be maintained through the forests. The predicament is, we do not have any policies on controlling elephant densities. Because of external pressure, we cannot kill elephants. But, if we want elephants to remain here indefinitely we must manage them so they remain in balance with their habitat."

The second scenario, one that is more compatible with tradition elephant life and with the views of those who wish to preserve what is perhaps the most powerful symbol of an Africa many feel

is disappearing, is in areas like Amboseli, Tsavo and Samburu. Sparsely populated by pastoralists and ranchers whose life style is more in harmony with elephants, these areas can still support large herds. It is here that KWS is encouraging development which will reinforce elephant conservation. By supporting tourist-based enterprises and encouraging people to abandon a trend towards sedentary farming, KWS hopes to reduce the potential for conflict and create a climate where local people will see elephants and other wildlife as a benefit.

"This is the time for investment," Waithaka says. With KWS help, communities are putting up lodges and camp sites and creating an infrastructure for ecotourism. KWS is treading a fine line. Although it doesn't want to be seen as a source of hand-outs, it cannot just stand by and wait for things to happen. "We are facilitators," Waithaka says. "The people are extremely poor. If they can't afford to take their children to school, how can they build a lodge? Phrases like community-based conservation do not make sense unless the ordinary person is able to take his child to school through that money. In the past there were policies that said the money should go to the people but it never did. That is why we have had serious problems. Just by saying it does not change attitudes. What will change attitudes is if it is actually happening. And it is happening today." ❧

**'Human-wildlife conflict is so severe today that unless we do something now, something positive, wildlife is endangered....**

**People have been the problem. They will be the solution.'**

# **Focus on...: The Maasai Mara:** ***Whose Heritage Is It?***



**The Maasai Mara is widely regarded as the jewel in Kenya's wildlife crown. Nearly half of all Kenya's tourists spend at least a day in the 1,510 square kilometre reserve. Yet, despite its enormous potential, the Mara is attracting increasing negative publicity, reports Ken Opala.**

**Above:  
Wildebeest  
crossing the  
Mara River on  
their annual  
migration.**

*Photograph:  
Rick Edwards*

**A**S A SOURCE OF REVENUE AND AS A wildlife habitat, the Maasai Mara National Reserve is the richest of Kenya's twenty five national parks, four marine parks, twenty two national reserves and five marine reserves. It is also a crucial component of the massive Serengeti ecosystem to the south.

Yet, despite its huge revenue and reputation - recent figures put the reserve's income at over 900 million Kenya shillings (\$16 million) - the Mara is sagging under the accumulated weight of myriad problems. Stories of unchecked development, harassed wildlife, ecological degradation caused by visitor congestion, run-down roads, corruption and widespread dissatisfaction amongst neighbouring communities over compensation all contribute to the image of a resource in need of better management.

Unlike Kenya's national parks which are administered by the central government through the

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the Maasai Mara National Reserve belongs to the Maasai people and is administered by Narok County Council. "There is a wide difference between the quality of management of national parks and that of reserves," observes Dr. David Western, KWS director. "KWS policy has always been to plough back every coin reaped from its parks. In the case of reserves, county councils have other interests, not necessarily to develop game reserves. Relatively little money goes to the reserves. There is a conflict of interests."

This apparent conflict led to the Office of the President and the Kenyan Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources writing in May to the Narok County Council asking it to relinquish some of its control of the Maasai Mara to the government. The result was instant controversy, with Maasai leaders united in opposition to any change.

"We will not be separated from our wildlife

that we have so diligently preserved," Local Government Minister William Ntimama told reporters in May. "The mzungu [white man] did not do it; [late President Jomo] Kenyatta failed; we fought [Dr. Richard] Leakey and we are ready to fight many more Leakeys."

Dr. Leakey resigned as KWS head in March 1994 after a campaign of vilification by senior politicians. Many regard his downfall as being due to his interest in the Mara. The current KWS director is more circumspect. "I don't think the government wants to take over the reserve," he recently told Nairobi's Nation newspaper." The issue is security, he contends.

Various bodies are involved in security in the Mara, including KWS rangers, the paramilitary GSU and rangers under Narok County Council control who possess an estimated 250 rifles. This proliferation of guns outside government control leads to inevitable fears of banditry and poaching. "What the government is concerned about is that security under the council does not come under any outside discipline. It is insisting that the game rangers come under government control just like KWS rangers," Western says.

However, the issues surrounding the Maasai Mara go much deeper than security worries. The reserve's reputation has certainly improved since it shot to international disrepute eight years ago through tales of poaching, banditry and murder. Since then, visitor levels have risen by ten percent a year to over 400,000 in 1995. The reserve has even been hailed as a conservation success story with its increased elephant numbers and the formation of group ranches on its outskirts to further protect the wildlife.

But this success record has not been reflected in the reserve's management, and industry heavyweights from the Government to tour operators and hotel owners feel that all is not well. The main feeder road to the Mara, the Nairegi Enkare/Mara road is in an appalling condition and little has been done to maintain it. Constant wear and tear by mostly tour vans has reduced a 150 kilometre stretch to a tattered, pot-holed ribbon of tar. A concerned manager

describes the road network feeding the reserve as "terrible, embarrassingly bad," while another notes that while resort standards have improved markedly over the past six years, infrastructure has not kept up.

Tour van owners, affected by the poor roads, complain their vehicles quickly become unroadworthy. Not only is tourists' time being wasted in an inordinately slow and uncomfortable drive, but maintenance costs have gone up. "These costs have to be reflected in the ultimate price. This is why Kenya has emerged as an expensive destination," says an official of Big Five, a prominent tour company.

Maybe visitors' and operators' complaints have begun to sink in. Recently the Kenya government has begun to commit resources to repair the worst sections. Major players in Mara tourism welcomed the initiative and expressed hope that it indicates the government's commitment to generally improving the area's infrastructure.

Inside the reserve, the roads are in relatively good shape, but there are not enough of them. Over 50,000 tour vans now enter the park annually. The lack of viewing circuits has made it difficult for the authorities to ban off-road driving leading to sections of the reserve being riddled with random vehicle tracks which are not only an eyesore but an environmental headache.

To an extent the Mara is a victim of its own success. A big

issue facing the reserve is congestion. The push to develop new hotels and campsites has been tremendous in and around the reserve. The first lodge, Keekorok, was built in 1965 and since then over 20 lodges and camps have gone up inside or adjacent to the reserve. Many have been built within the past seven years, despite a 1987 directive banning new development until a capacity study was completed. Additionally, notes an official of a non-governmental organisation involved in research in the Mara, "virtually all the lodges and camps have expanded over the last few years and there's a myriad of tents and other temporary camps dotted all over the dispersal areas."

The resulting congestion has a variety of im-

*Photographs:  
Nation Newspapers*



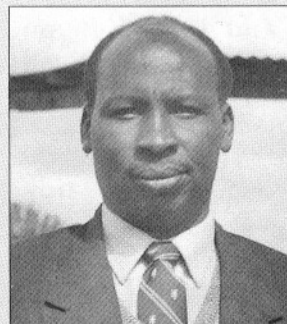
**Leakey: Said to have had ambitions to take over the Mara.**



**Ntimama: Maasai will not be separated from their wildlife.**



**Western: Local communities are getting a raw deal.**



**Rotiken: The Mara's problems have been identified.**

*Ken Opala is a reporter for the Nairobi daily newspaper, The Nation.*

pacts. The increased demand for fuel wood is causing deforestation while the lack of waste disposal sites is leading to ugly heaps of litter by the roadside as far from the Mara as Suswa in the Rift Valley. There are also reports of pollution and poisoning in the Mara River.

Wildlife, too, is suffering - through harassment. Tour operators, under pressure from tourists to see it all in the day or so they have on safari, communicate by VHF radio and crowd round the popular species. It has got so bad that there are reports of cheetahs resorting to hunting by night.

To attempt to alleviate the consequences of congestion, a new law has been passed giving a 2,000 shilling (\$36) fine for despoiling the Mara's environment whether it be through irregular disposal of waste or off-road driving. However, the Mara's chief warden fears the fine will not be a sufficient deterrent.

Meanwhile, communities in the 8,000 square kilometre dispersal area crucial to the maintenance of the Mara ecosystem are complaining. Although visitors are up and lodges are expanding, the local Maasai say they are not benefiting. According to David Western: "The Mara resource reaps so much money but little percolates to the local communities. They are getting a raw deal." Revenue from the Maasai Mara has made Narok County Council the richest civic authority in the country. Yet, within the district, dissatisfaction is rife. In Aitong, north

of the reserve, farmers have tilled 200 acres to grow wheat on land reserved for wildlife, setting a worrying precedent and leading to concerns for the future of the annual wildebeest migration through the area.

Why are local communities threatening their resource? Persistent famine is blamed: "People have to understand that you cannot dictate here. Those ploughing are aware of the long-term effect of their action, but they have reached the stage where they think they are not getting enough compensation," observes Mara Senior Game Warden James Sindiyo. "Unless a compensation policy is formulated, you cannot tell people to stop."

There is widespread poverty around the reserve despite the huge revenue the Mara generates. Narok County Council claims the money generated goes to health care and educational programmes, but locals complain of a lack of schools and clinics. For example, Talek village on the reserve's northern boundary lacks a dispensary and easily avoidable diseases like dysentery and typhoid are common.

The dispersal area around the Maasai Mara is formed into six group ranches. The largest, which also encompasses the reserve, is the 800,000 acre Koiyaki ranch. Yet, despite the various tourism-related activities on their ranch, the 1,700 members earn a meagre 1,500 shillings (\$27) a year in compensation. "We don't know where the money goes," says Lokita ole Moserian who, although he is treasurer of Koiyaki group ranch, is unaware of how much his group earns.

Some say the answer lies in corruption, a charge Narok County Council leader Shadrack ole Rotiken dismisses, maintaining that the Mara is well managed. "The richest councils in the country are those with game reserves," he comments. "Look at the Mara. We are running it efficiently. That is why we cannot let it go." The council's critics want to grab the Mara to make money at the expense of the Maasai community, he maintains. "We threw out Dr. Leakey because we Maasai want to control our own resources."

So, the storm over the Mara rages on. On the one side, Koiyaki Location Senior Chief Kipeen Sayialel, the administrator of the Koiyaki dispersal area says the Mara is here to stay, so long as it remains under Maasai management. On the other hand, some conservationists, citing the success story of Amboseli National Park, also situated in Maasai country, think the reserve would be better off under KWS management. But, say the sceptics, local communities will suffer more under government control than at present.

The answer probably lies in dialogue. The consensus opinion is that any changes should be gradual and based on sound research. Meanwhile, Narok County Council should take the lead. It has already undertaken a study of the main problem areas and it has signed a memorandum of understanding with KWS to assist the Mara authorities to attract donor funding. The Mara's problems, Rotiken says, have been identified. What remains is to solicit funds to tackle them.

### **Mara Facts**

**Between 1970 and 1990, Kenyan populations of wild herbivores declined between 40% and 60%. The rate of decline was higher in the 1970s than in the 1980s.**

**The largest single decline in total wild herbivore numbers occurred in Narok District where 37% of the total national decline was detected.**

**The Maasai Mara represents between 30% and 60% of wild herbivores found in Kenya's protected areas.**

**Outside peak migration times, between 15% and 30% of Kenya's wild herbivores are in protected areas. Almost equal numbers of wild herbivores are found in buffer zones up to 20 kilometres around protected areas. Approximately half of Kenya's wild herbivores are therefore found in and around protected areas.**

**Conclusion: The areas adjacent to protected areas are crucial to the management of wildlife within protected areas. These areas must be evaluated for their importance to the ecology of protected areas. Ecosystems should form the basis for managing protected areas.**

*Source: Department of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing, National Rangelands Report 1977-1994.*

***Focus on...:***

# The Magic of the Mara

Six reasons why the Maasai Mara is still one of the most special places on Earth.



*Photographs by Rick Edwards*







*Overleaf:*  
*Top: Malachite kingfisher*  
*Bottom: Leopard*

*Left:*  
*Top: Bat-eared foxes*  
*Bottom: Zebras*

*This page:*  
*Top: Young male*  
*elephants playing*  
*Bottom: Hyena*

# QUIZ

Which country is one of the world's safest holiday destinations?

Which country has the most varied wildlife?

Which country has the best beaches and ocean sports in the world?

Where do you get top value for your money?

Which paradise is only eight hours from Europe?

Which operator **invented** economy safaris with their Turkana Bus?

Which operator now has the widest range of safaris with their "Hedges Collection"?

Which company is big enough to have all its own facilities, camps, vehicles and legendary couriers (most with twenty years bush experience) and yet small enough to look after you personally, and their Directors meet and greet you?

Which company's Managing Director is known to every travel agent in the U.K.

because his name has been on their shelves for twenty years?

## Answers:

Kenya  
Safari Camp Services  
Dick Hedges

For instant information, bookings and details contact:

Safari Camp Services Ltd.  
P.O. Box 44801, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Tel: 228936/330130, Fax: 254-2-212160  
<http://www.Kilimanjaro.Com/Safaris/scs>



Left: The red flower heads of the fire ball lily (*Scadoxus multiflorus*) appear before its leaves.

(W. Braunstein)

Right: *Kalanchoe schweinfurthii* lives among stony outcrops and stores water in its fleshy leaves and stem.

(W. Braunstein)



Left: The 'ox killer' (*Boeophone disticha*) defends its bulb by storing a strong poison. (W. Braunstein)

Right: The beautiful flame lily (*Gloriosa superba*) climbs through bushes and along grass blades using its leaves as tendrils. (W. Braunstein)



# The Secret Life of Mara Flowers

**How do the Maasai Mara's plants cope with the extreme conditions created by the dry and wet seasons? How do they survive the passing of hundreds of thousands of hungry, trampling herbivores, and how do they win the intense competition for light, water and nutrients? *Wolfgang Braunstein sheds some light.***

**H**UGE HERDS OF WILDEBEEST following the seasonal rains on their migration, feeding on the endless plains accompanied by antelopes, gazelles, zebras and buffalo. Prides of lions, hyena clans, elusive leopards and swift cheetahs waiting for their share.

That is the picture of the Maasai Mara-Serengeti ecosystem seen in numerous television programmes, magazines and coffee table books, a picture that makes the Maasai Mara one of the most attractive places in the world for tourists keen on seeing the real African wilderness.

But, how much does the visitor get to learn about the fascinating survival strategies of the Mara's plants? I have never seen a tour vehicle stop for one of the small flowers by the wayside, tiny jewels hidden among the volcanic rocks, climbing in the bushes or living in the trees yet, if they did, it would be worth it.

What kinds of plants would you expect to see travelling through a country just one degree south of the equator blessed by plentiful rainfall during a year? Wonderful exotic flowers, huge colourful orchids and shrubs covered with blossoms?

No. Reality is a bit different in the grasslands of the Maasai Mara. Months without a drop of rain are followed by periods of short heavy downpours changing the dusty plains into a quagmire. Bush and grass fires, natural and man-made, destroy vegetation and there is no place on earth with a higher density of herbivores. Not such a plant paradise after all.

The response of the Mara's plants was to evolve to fit the niches available to them. Many flower annually, producing either masses of seeds or a smaller amount of extremely robust seeds capable of resting in the soil, sometimes for many years,

before germinating quickly after rain so as to finish their circle of life before drought returns.

Bulbs, tubers, thick rootstocks and succulent leaves are the usual tricks enabling perennial plants to adapt to seasonal rainfall. The earth might dry out, or fires may pass over, but deep down in the earth they are not affected. With the first rain they appear, apparently out of nothing, and produce their flowers, often before their leaves. Time is the essence. The leaves, when they sprout, collect and store as many nutrients as possible until the dry conditions make life too hard to support green leaves. The green dies and the whole plant is again nothing more than a starchy brown thing.

The fire ball lily (*Scadoxus multiflorus*), the pyjama lily (*Crinum macrowani*) and *Ammocharis tinneana*, which use bulbs as stores, are the most striking, recognisable as the red and pink spots dotting the Mara plains. The famous flame lily (*Gloriosa superba*) grows quickly from a tuber, climbing upwards among the long grass, shrubs and small trees using its leaves as tendrils. It then presents its beautiful flowers high above the grass, an invitation to birds and insects.

Of course, starchy tubers are also interesting to animals, as well as the fleshy leaves. Therefore, storing poisonous or bitter substances along with nutritious ones is an effective defence. Few animals have developed counter-strategies and, for most, the plants remain unpalatable and survive.

One example is the ox killer (*Boeophone disticha*), one of the most poisonous plants around. Besides its effective chemical defence, the ox killer has developed a clever way of distributing its seeds. When ripening, the whole fruiting inflo-

rescence becomes stiff, breaks off and rolls away over the mostly rocky slopes this species prefers, shedding seeds in the process. Several other plants, like *Kalanchoe shweinfurthi* or *Kleinia abyssinica*, store their nutrients and water in fleshy leaves or stems, again in combination with bad tasting chemicals to avoid being eaten.

One of the most typical flowers on the East African grasslands is the white tissue flower (*Cyrtium tubulosum*) which you will see spread in thousands over the plains after rain. They really do look like discarded tissue paper on first sight, but in this case there is no need to complain about litter bugs.

The tissue flower has developed another effective strategy to cope with the challenges of savannah life. It is a semi-parasite. Since its small leaves do not provide enough energy, the tissue flower bonds its rootstock to grass roots from which it draws its main nourishment. When the first shoots of grass spring up after the rain, so, by using the grasses' energy, do the tissue flowers.

Orchids of the genus *Aerangis* have developed another survival trick. Attached by succulent, spongelike roots to tree bark, they collect and store water and nutrients in bulbs. Once a year they produce the most beautiful flowers and aromas, attracting moths and insects in their hundreds.

All of these flowers have a role to play in the complex tapestry of life that is the Maasai Mara. An army of butterflies, bees and other insects depend on these plants, and they in turn are food for the birds, lizards and small mammals of the plains. So, next time you are on safari, don't overlook the small things by the wayside, they all have their place in the scheme of things. ✎

## Weather Distemper Virus

In September 1994, lions in the Masai Mara began dying in record numbers. *Lou Bergeron reports.*

**T**HE DISEASE KILLING THEM WAS A NEW strain of canine distemper virus (CDV), which despite its name, was vividly demonstrating a newfound ability to infect felines. CDV had been sweeping through Serengeti National Park in Tanzania since February, killing roughly thirty percent of the lion population, with some prides reportedly losing up to seventy percent of their members.

But it now appears the epidemic may have run its course. Blood tests of the Mara lions performed in December 1995 showed two thirds of them carrying antibodies for the distemper virus, indicating that they had been exposed to the disease and survived. This is clearly good news, not only for the lions, but for the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) veterinarians who monitor them, as it gives both some breathing room.

Though the present epidemic appears to have burned itself out, there are still pressing questions to be answered that will have a direct effect on the future health of the lions. The most puzzling question is how CDV was able to infect the big cats in the first place. Until 1993, when an outbreak occurred in some wild animal parks in southern California, CDV had never been known to infect felines. Richard Kock, a senior veterinary advisor with KWS, suspects the spotted hyena population may have been the key link in the East African epidemic.

CDV is known to exist in domestic and feral dogs around the Masai Mara and Serengeti. But, as Kock notes, "dogs don't really mess around with lions." Hyenas, on the other hand, have contact with both lions and dogs. "Hyenas often share rubbish dumps with dogs," says Kock. "You can get a population of one or two hundred hyenas around small towns." Because CDV is transmitted orally, a rubbish dump, where both dogs and hyenas are eating and fighting, is an ideal transmission point. "So CDV went into the hyenas," Kock says, "and we have plenty of evidence of hyenas being infected." As lions are notorious for stealing kills from hyenas, a second point of contact was readily available to complete the chain.


But simple exposure to a virus doesn't guarantee that the animal exposed will contract it. The virus has to be one to which a given animal is susceptible, and in the past lions had always appeared immune.

An outbreak of CDV in domestic dogs in 1991-92 crossed over into the Cape hunting dogs around the Mara, wiping out the entire population. Yet even though CDV had clearly entered the wild, lions were untouched. What made the 1994-95 epidemic suddenly so deadly to the big cats? Again, hyenas are the suspects.

According to Kock, for the recent outbreak to have been so devastating, a slight genetic modification must have occurred in the virus. "The normal strains had not been effective in lions," he says. "Perhaps the modification took place in hyenas, and got into the lions, and obviously was very effective at killing them."

Once the hyenas were carrying a strain of CDV that had mutated to attack lions, transmission was easy. In addition to passing from hyena to lion, the virus would have passed from lion to lion. A single infected lion would transmit the disease to its whole pride. And male lions, who sometimes move from one pride to another, could have spread the disease to other prides that might not have had contact with infected hyenas. Kock estimates that about thirty percent of the Mara's lions died.

Though lions were the most severely affected by the recent CDV outbreak, the virus was not confined only to them. Determining the full extent to which a particular species was hurt is difficult, as the corpses of the dead don't linger long before being consumed by one of the many opportunistic scavengers on the savannah. But the veterinarians did see evidence that bat-eared foxes were hit hard, and CDV was also confirmed in a few jackals and leopards.

So what does the future hold for the lions of the Masai Mara? According to Kock, so long as the domestic animal population around the Mara remains unhealthy and in close contact with wild animals, wildlife will be at risk. Although a vaccine has been developed that appears to be effective in lions, KWS has decided against using it because there is always a chance of an inoculated lion developing the disease through exposure to the vaccine. Instead, KWS will be running a vaccination program for domestic dogs around the Mara this summer. If KWS can achieve a sixty percent vaccination rate in the dogs, a goal Kock considers feasible, that should prevent another outbreak. 

**It now appears the epidemic may have run its course.**

*Lou Bergeron is a freelance science writer.*

**Focus on....:**

# The Cruel End of a Cheetah Partnership

**Wolfgang Braunstein** tells the story of a cheetah relationship cut short by poachers.

**R**ETURNING ONE EVENING AT THE END of October 1995 from a game drive to our camp near Aitong, a few kilometres north of the Maasai Mara National Reserve's northern boundary, I came across a cheetah being chased by some lionesses. Nothing really extraordinary, I first thought. After all, these cats are no friends at all.

I knew this strong male cheetah quite well. We knew him as Carl. Over about four months I had seen him regularly in the area around our camp, always accompanied by a second male, younger and smaller, that we named Lewis. We never met one of them alone, they obviously had developed a close and effective partnership. Together they managed to hunt quite big prey, mostly male impalas, with Carl leading the hunt and Lewis assisting. They were quite an attraction for tourists and for the female cheetahs in the area.

So, as I saw Carl being chased by the lionesses and finally getting away, the question arose: Where was Lewis? The answer, a lion's roar, came from across the lugga. The lionesses on our side joined in and I found myself amongst the most moving lion concert. Crossing the lugga I found the source of the roar, a huge male lion, one of the two resident males, lying on a small hill looking at about eight minibuses and Land-Cruisers in a circle.

But, the circle wasn't around the lion but about 20 metres aside. There I found Lewis dead in the wet grass. The drivers were busy telling the story of how the "king of beasts", the lion, kills all other cats and how the male behind them just had mauled that cheetah. The tourists in their vehicles seemed happy, took their photos and the whole lot soon drove away.

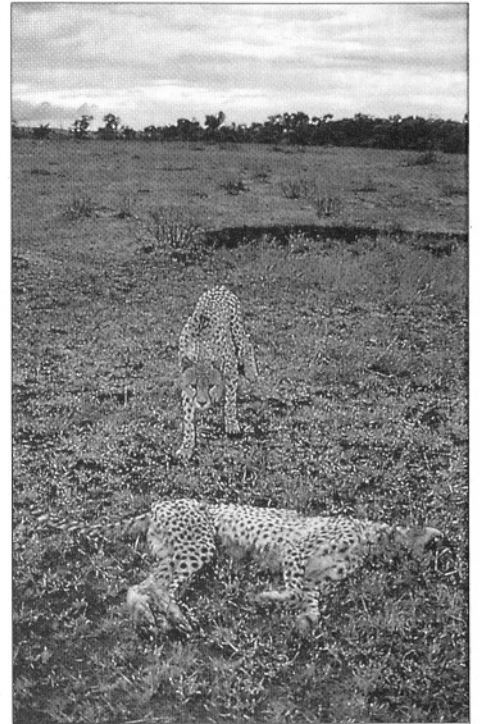
They must have been blind. Obviously no-one had seen the real cause of the cheetah's death although the remains of a wire snare were still around its neck. He had been terribly strangled. Deep cuts, still bloody, made it easy to imagine how painful the last hours or even days of that cheetah must have been. His thin body showed that he hadn't been able to eat for quite some time. The lion was nothing more than a release for suffering Lewis. While I was taking some photos, two men on foot, armed with bows and arrows, came around the nearby edge of forest, saw our vehicle and made off in the oppo-

site direction. I stayed until darkness and then went off to inform the nearby KWS ranger post about the incident.

Early next morning the rangers came to our camp and together we drove to the small clearing where the drama had taken place. We found Lewis' carcass. It had not been touched by hyenas or any other scavengers. Why? Because Carl had returned and was sitting nearby, sniffing around his dead partner and licking at the wet grass. Obviously he had just waited until the lion pride and our car had left and then he must have come back to stay with his dead friend. Even when the rangers left the vehicle to examine the poacher's victim, Carl stayed nearby, mourning. Anxiously he watched the rangers moving the carcass and fixing it with a rope to our vehicle so that we could pull it away into dense bush. This would get it out of sight and force Carl to leave the place where he was an easy target for any enemy, especially two-legged ones. Carl left during the morning and I found him three days later on an impala kill. Life and death go on in the Masai Mara.

But, the incident raises a number of issues. First, poachers are active in the Masai Mara. Several times we found quite large numbers of snares along the forest edges and the Mara River. We discovered snared zebras, topis and lions and several times we come across groups of people sneaking around, carrying bows and arrows. Occasionally I had a look at a bunch of arrows and saw that some were poisoned. Secondly, snares kill indiscriminately and endangered species like cheetahs are likely to be cruelly killed.

Finally, it is not really true that tourists protect wildlife just by their presence. Drivers and tourists must not merely be content to tick off the Big Five, and tell and listen to second-hand stories. They need to watch their surroundings with real interest, patience and insight.



**Partners no longer. A snare, not lions, was the cause of this cheetah's death.**

*Photograph:  
Wolfgang Braunstein*

*Wolfgang Braunstein lived for a year in the Maasai Mara. He contributed 'Mara Spiders' to Swara in May/June 1995.*

# Bird Ringing in Queen Elizabeth NP

East Africa is home to roughly 1,500 native species of birds, and plays seasonal host to approximately 200 other species that pass through the region during migrations, some from as far away as South Africa and Siberia. But this abundance of birdlife doesn't translate into an abundance of knowledge, says *Lou Bergeron*.

**A male green-headed sunbird, one of hundreds netted and ringed during the project.**

*Photograph:  
Lou Bergeron*

**P**ERHAPS BECAUSE OF the huge number of bird species visiting East Africa, much remains to be learned about them. This lack of knowledge is more than just a frustration to twitchers and trivia buffs. It leaves a profound gap in our understanding of the physical environment in which not only the birds, but other creatures including ourselves, exist.

But efforts are underway that could go a long way towards improving our understanding. There are several ongoing projects in East Africa where researchers are capturing birds, attaching a ring for identification to one leg, and releasing them.

If, or when, the birds are captured again, in East Africa or elsewhere, they will provide new information on their migration habits, life cycles, and a host of other characteristics.

The Mweya Ringing Association, a group of bird ringers and researchers from Britain, are working to establish a permanent ringing station in Queen Elizabeth National Park in western Uganda, where the ecological communities of the East African savannah and the dense forests of West Africa overlap. Nestled in the Western Rift Valley below the Rwenzori Mountains, Mweya Peninsula juts into the water where the Kazinga Channel from Lake George flows into Lake Edward. It is an ideal setting to base a ringing scheme, as the lakes of the Western Rift are a major pathway for migrating birds, both regional and overseas visitors. Additionally, the area near Mweya has enough diversity of habitats to be home to a wide variety of resident bird species. River and lake habitats give way along the shoreline to wetlands and mud flats, reed beds and papyrus



swamps. Moving inland from the water lie dry scrub and grasslands, rocky slopes, acacia woodland, and moist tropical forest. Soda lakes sit within several of the volcanic craters.

The Mweya ringing project was conceived in 1995 by Malcolm Wilson while he was assisting a researcher studying several packs of banded mongoose in the park. "Banded mongoose sleep a lot," Wilson notes, "so you've got a lot of time to think about other things and look at birds." An avid birder with several years ringing experience, he realised that the park held tremendous potential as a ringing site.

Wilson, along with three other bird ringers and the project zoologist, conducted a pilot study in April 1996. Setting up nets in a variety of habitats, they spent two weeks netting and ringing almost 1,000 birds from 70 species. Approximately two thirds were either resident birds or Afrotropical migrant birds, which seldom stray from Africa. The other third were palearctic migrants, whose annual jour-

neys take them from wintering grounds as far south as South Africa, up to eastern Europe or Siberia for the summer. Altogether, over 250 different species were sighted.

The birds themselves ranged from brilliantly coloured resident birds like malachite kingfishers, red-chested sunbirds and weavers, to more subtly-hued palearctic migrants like little stints and common snipes. One afternoon the nets even caught a full-grown peregrine falcon, creating a bit of a challenge for the ringers who had to extract it from the net.

Although wrapping a metal band around a little bird's leg may sound upsetting to the bird, experience has shown otherwise. "Trapping a bird and putting a ring on it will not alter its behaviour," says Wilson. He says that although a newly ringed bird will sometimes peck at the ring just after it's been put on, they quickly adjust to their new fashion accessory. "Birds basically get on with it," Wilson says. "They can't waste time sulking or feeling bad. If they did, they'd starve."

The next stage of the project is a three-year study tentatively scheduled to start in 1997. In addition to gathering data and ringing birds, the association hopes to train two Ugandan university graduates and two field assistants from the Uganda Institute of Ecology to carry on the work beyond the initial three years. If funding can be secured, the project should provide a wealth of data for use in making management decisions regarding conservation of birdlife in Queen Elizabeth National Park, as well as identifying areas outside the park that are important to birds. By learning more about the migration routes and colonisation patterns of the different species, the Mweya project could also shed light on the state of other regions the migrant species pass through. "Birds are a good barometer of the environment," ringer Barry Williams says. "If they don't turn up, there's something wrong somewhere." Right now there isn't enough known about some species to assess the importance of population changes, but the Mweya project could help establish a baseline to aid scientists in making such evaluations.

The Mweya Ringing Association is currently in the process of obtaining charitable status in the U.K. The association is working in conjunction with the already established Ringing Scheme of East Africa, and has made a tentative association with the Uganda Institute of Ecology, with plans afoot for affiliations with other educational, governmental and conservation organisations in East Africa.

# Study Finds Fewer Mountain Gorillas

**After comparing the habitat, ecology, behaviour and morphology of the gorillas of Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest National Park and the Virunga Volcanoes, scientists conclude that the animals in the Impenetrable Forest are not mountain gorillas. *By Esteban Sarmiento.***

**T**HE APPROXIMATELY 300 GORILLAS IN THE Impenetrable Forest of southeast Uganda were considered to comprise nearly half of the world's population of roughly 620 mountain gorillas. The other 320 individuals live twenty five kilometres to the south in the Virunga Volcanoes, the area where this gorilla subspecies was first discovered and described. Relative to the Virunga gorillas, those in the Impenetrable Forest live at a lower elevation, in warmer temperatures and are more arboreal. They have longer day ranges, larger home ranges and eat much more fruit and pith and less bamboo and leaves.

These differences in habitat, ecology and behaviour are reflected in their morphology. Impenetrable Forest gorillas have much smaller bodies; relatively longer limbs, hands and feet; shorter thumbs, big toes and cheek tooth rows and narrower trunks and orbital breadths than Virunga gorillas.

Considering their close correspondence to behaviour and habitat, these morphological differences are adaptive in nature and indicate that Impenetrable Forest gorillas are not mountain gorillas. Further studies may show whether the gorillas of the Impenetrable Forest are unique or whether they belong to the eastern lowland subspecies.

This finding effectively reduces the number of true mountain gorillas to 320. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of supporting conservation measures to ensure the survival of both populations, at least one of which is unique. Both populations continue to be faced with a variety of threat, most recently by an increase in poaching.

**'This finding effectively reduces the number of true mountain gorillas to 320.'**

*Esteban Sarmiento is based at: The Department of Mammalogy, American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY 10024, U.S.A.  
Fax: 212-769-5239  
E-mail est@amnh.org*

*Reprinted with the permission of 'African Primates', ed. Thomas Butynski, Zoo Atlanta, African Biodiversity Program, P.O. Box 24434, Nairobi, Kenya.*

# ***Life in the Wild:* A Brush with Painted Wolves**

**Wild dogs are no longer found around the Maasai Mara, reports Nigel Dougherty, but there are promising signals coming from the wilds of Kajiado to the east. Photographs by Karin Dougherty.**

**B**ACK IN THE MID 1980s, TO SEE THE Aitong pack was a real highlight for any wildlife enthusiast visiting the Maasai Mara. But now, only a few years on, the Aitong pack is gone. This famous group of wild dogs - along with the rest of the Mara and Serengeti populations - has perished, victims to canine distemper, canine parvovirus and rabies, diseases all alien to the evolutionary experience of the wild dog immune system.

Their fate was quickly spelled out, for wild dogs lick each other in an immensely complex social repertoire, facilitating disease transmission within and between packs. Groups soon disintegrated, exposing the remainder to the trials of existence as ever smaller units. Intervening measures involving vaccinating wild dogs, their domestic kin and other canids failed. Some even believe they may have played an important part in the decline.

Against this sad background we can add some reassuring touches to a more global picture of how the "painted wolf" is faring. Wild dogs, of the monitored, unmonitored and introduced kind, do still exist in East Africa. After the demise of the Serengeti-Mara population, the most promise should now perhaps be pinned on the work of Scott and Nancy Creel, a couple who have relentlessly studied the wild dogs of the Selous-Mikumi ecosystem and who can report a stable, healthy population. Through their efforts we have a reasonable idea of the parameters determining this population's viability, and these are the only dogs in East Africa whose lives are understood with quite some fidelity.

There are, of course, others. One population in Mkomazi has been relocated from a gathering of dogs taken from the huge Maasai Steppe south of Tarangire National Park. So far, the dogs are doing well in an interesting project that is the brainchild of Tony Fitzjohn. Then there are the rest. They are tiny moving needles in a colossal African haystack. I recently saw seven dogs out hunting in the Toposaland of southern Sudan, and have pondered endlessly over their statistical contribution to a wider population.

Reliable informants report similar glimpses in the forests of Mount Nyiru and in the Ndoto and Matthews Ranges. Deliberations with people sta-

tioned in the field have also been most interesting and we make informal inquiries of the rangers each time we visit a park. Positive reports have come from Tsavo West, and the fact that the investigations are far from exhaustive adds to our optimism. We hope to formalise a survey soon.

In the thick tangle of the African bush, it is hard to deduce exactly how rare wild dogs really are, because they are so elusive. This is probably adaptive, given man's uncomfortable association with them. Nevertheless, intermittent sightings confirm their existence and suggest a very wide and extremely sparse population. The question is, should this be a cause for concern, or have dogs always loped in small numbers across vast areas, giving a perhaps rather deluding impression of apparent and increasing rarity?

Wild dogs are the most social of all carnivores and we should not just believe with complacency that such a wonderful product of evolution will surely survive unaided for further generations to see. Their own special evolutionary and ecological role of keeping herds on the move and, in so doing, helping sustain biodiversity deserves our further, most special attention.

Counting these unmonitored populations of dogs and developing and implementing a strategy for their conservation is hard and ungratifying work. Yet it is being attempted. Our attempt was borne from a hunch. Might the relatives of the Mara dogs have fared better in a different habitat? The first pointer to an existing relict of the Mara population arose from reports that the Loita Hills still provide sanctuary to some dogs. Karin Dougherty, a helpless witness to the Mara decline, began to probe the possibility that the Great Rift to the east could also be part of the dogs' range. Her suspicions bore more promise with reports from the Rift of evidence of dogs. An invitation for further enquiry came from the Elangata Wuas Ecosystem Management Programme in Kajiado and, as part of this programme, Karin has been promoting wild dog conservation ever since.

Kajiado is an enormous contrast to the wide open plains of the Mara-Serengeti. Carpeted by an often thick mosaic of *Acacia* and *Commiphora* thorn,



**Although lost from the Maasai Mara, evidence suggests packs of wild dogs still survive in the vast wilderness to the east**

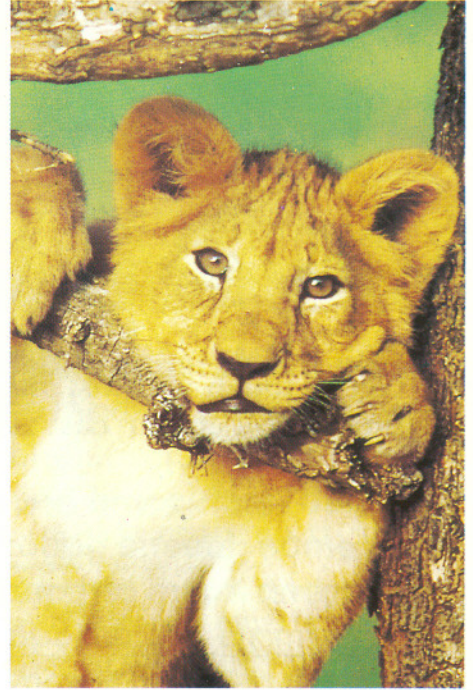
it is a hot and dry land of lava flows, vertical faults, escarpments, boulder strewn plains, volcanic ash pits and gorges cut by flash floods - the perfect deterrent to field research on a sparsely distributed, shy and highly mobile animal. The logical solution would be to apply technology. Radio tracking, particularly using collars with computerised links to satellite positioning systems has enabled other canines to be monitored in the most gruelling field conditions elsewhere in the world. Its application would not only provide spatial and temporal information about the way the dogs relate to each other and make use of the environment, but it would take away the invisible aspect of finding packs. This would permit interventive activities such as vaccination, closer monitoring of pack performance and, most importantly, would assist in refining our understanding of the dogs' life histories.

Unfortunately, radio collaring, and indeed handling of any kind, is a closed option in Kenya. A recent analysis of demographic data from the Mara-Serengeti looked into the phenomenon of "rapid pack death" which afflicted many of the packs whose dogs were handled by researchers. In a theory that has since determined management policy in Kenya, the proponents argue that handling wild dogs is unwise if they already have a high risk of disease exposure. The stress factor induced by handling and collaring, they believe, contributes to a lethal immunological breakdown. Counter proponents have also analysed the information, and dismiss this conclusion as an improper use of statistics. Until this debate is resolved, though, if the dogs are to be tracked, it has to be done largely on foot. The practicalities of research thus rest on determination, acuteness (for surprise encounters with lions) and some degree of masochism. This is the course Karin started and has been pursuing for nearly six years. The methodology is unique, with interesting merits as well as limitations.

The Elangata Wuas Programme is a pioneering effort in Kenya. It is a holistic approach towards the conservation of indigenous resources through their sustainable use under the direction of the local Maasai community, supported and advised by the National Museums of Kenya. Pilot projects sometimes fail, but the knowledge acquired is priceless in the application of local custodianship to wildlife conservation and the key, perhaps, to its future in unprotected areas. Wild dogs are part of the heritage of the Maasai people and their conservation is ultimately dependent on keeping the diverse assemblage of life that exists in the area. Like the ostriches that are herded and the trees that are used for medicine and charcoal, wild dogs are part of this rich tapestry. It is just that helping them earn a living has somewhat more difficult prospects.

# AFRICA

## from Amboseli to Zanzibar



Whether you're following vast elephant herds on the Amboseli plains or exploring the Sultan's palace on Zanzibar, Wildlife Safari has thousands of safari combinations to Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Egypt, Seychelles and Mauritius.

## Wildlife Safari

International House

P O Box 56803

Nairobi

KENYA

Tel: 254 2 340 319

Fax: 254 2 338 972



# Albatros

TRAVEL & SAFARIS



*Your safari partner in East Africa*

- Regular lodge and tented safari departures
- Tailor made safaris for individuals, groups, families & incentive groups
- Mountain climbing, camel safaris and gorilla tracking
- Beach holidays - incl. Seychelles

Get in touch with us, and we will mail you our full colour East Africa brochure

P.O. Box 49322 - NAIROBI - KENYA  
TEL: (254-2) 243387/8, 242615/6 - FAX: (254-2) 226192

-----OR-----

KULTORVET 11 - 1175 - COPENHAGEN K - DENMARK  
TEL: (45) 33322488 - FAX: (45) 33320780

**BIG FIVE** tours & safaris Ltd.

# AFRICA



*Big Five - the people who care..*

Phoenix House, Kenyatta Avenue • P.O Box 10367  
Tel: 229803 • 228352 • 225167 • 213252 • 213103 • 213102 Fax: 254-2-337965, Nairobi

Karin's approach to wild dog conservation is based on fostering the respect that the Maasai already have for their natural environment, except that in the process some record capture, objectivity and routine has been applied. The project employs two members of the community, Nixon ole Setei and Nemanchu ole Kaisa, to monitor the wild dogs. Their strong interest in wildlife has shone since the initiation of the Ecosystem Programme and we are proud of their long and valued commitment to the dog project. Their research implements are modest but effective, consisting of a camera, good binoculars, data collection sheets, some accurate grid maps and, most important, their mother tongue. The principle of the project is simply to tap into the information network of the community which, in its daily pastoral activity, maintains complete vigilance. If seeing is believing, then their detective work bears fruit and it is most rewarding to piece together the dynamic jigsaw from fleeting glimpses of wild dogs in this world of wait-a-bit thorn.

The project has always been as modest as can be afforded by the voluntary inputs of its originator. In the daily routine, quantitative, relative and anecdotal information is collected on sighting and spoor locations, witnesses, pack sizes, denning sites, litter sizes, approximate ages of pups, prey densities, incidences of predation on domestic animals, histories of persecution, evidence of competition with other predators and related environmental parameters. The monitors have become a repository for information and it is encouraging that people within the community now make the effort to visit them whether it be with positive or negative news. As a parallel activity to data collection, in a collaborative effort with the District Veterinary Officer, all domestic dogs in the project area have been vaccinated against rabies to promote human health and to provide an area free of possible rabies transmission to wild dogs. The programme was received like an open fair, a Sunday activity of participation that brought smiles to the face of women and children alike, a novelty to the normal backbreaking chore of collecting water from the boreholes. The men, too, realised that healthier dogs mean better protected cattle. Not only did they appreciate the circle of benefit, but they became more conscious of their pets' wild relatives.

Within its constraints, the project has shed interesting light on the ways of the dogs and the trials they face. It appears they behave differently to the dogs of the open Mara-Serengeti ecosystem. Not only are they known at times to control much more localised territories, but large packs have rarely been recorded in Kajiado. In contrast, observers most often witness groups of no more than five dogs. It is thought that these units rarely mass together in a cooperative hunt, leading lives effectively independent of one another. In my mind, the population at large may perhaps have survived disease outbreaks better as a consequence of the independence of individuals. A tendency towards smaller groups is most likely a response to a more opportunist diet and perhaps because there is less competition from other preda-

tors at kills than is the case on the open plains. There are plenty of other predators but their ability to pirate the efforts of the dogs is limited by the thick bush.

The information, as with all research, raises more questions than it answers. While it is known that dogs are breeding regularly and in consistent places, patterns of dispersal from natal packs are not understood and neither population numbers nor trends are known. Even the very definition of what comprises the population is not a steadfast issue. While some dogs are relatively sedentary, returning to pupping sites, others are likely to be transient visitors and yet others so strongly nomadic that they may never return to the Kajiado area during their lives. The potential uninterrupted dog habitat is vast, stretching north to Suswa, west to the Mara, east to Tsavo and south to Mkomazi where the "new" dogs live. The task of building up a picture of the population is most daunting, but that is not really the aim. Perhaps the most important information to arise from the project is a catalogue of the threats facing the dogs. Several causes of death have been identified, and it is encouraging that as yet there is no incidence of disease-related mortality.

## The project has shed light on the ways of the dogs and the trials they face.

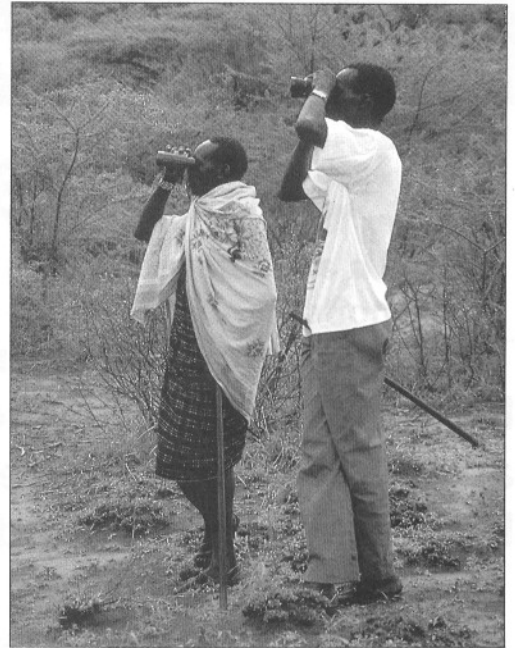
Accidents involving dogs being knocked down by vehicles on the Magadi and Namanga roads have taken their toll. But, as is expected, deliberate persecution is by far the most serious cause for concern and, sadly, the most common practice is to seek out dens and asphyxiate the mother and pups by smoking out the holes they eventually take refuge in. Poisoning, using bait laced with cattle dip is said to be general, but it is unlikely to be effective since the dogs do not scavenge, eating only what they bring down themselves.

It is against this realistic backdrop that the project must be viewed since wild dogs do prey on goats and sheep, (although predation is limited to what is intended for consumption). It would seem a tall order for such a seemingly renegade cause to succeed, and undoubtedly the most positive impact of the project has been how it has helped a community to begin to take pride in its heritage and express a degree of tolerance towards wild dogs. This in itself makes the whole investment worthwhile in Elangata Wuas. Slowly but surely, pride is beginning to replace the price of loss and this is so important in a community that is fighting to reconcile its identity with the demands of keeping up in a developing nation. Instances of persecution still occur, but the number of allies to the project's cause is growing. Just recently, reports came in from a chief - who sighted the dogs himself - reports which tallied with those of a little herdsboy and a Maasai woman who had come across a pack of the same size on her

way to collect water. The dogs still roam free and we suspect the group is supporting pups.

Kajiado is changing daily. So, in addition to the ever present threat of a disease epidemic, change is churning out new problems. As Kenya develops, the people of Elangata Wuas are under great pressure to make a wider economic contribution and their mainstay for now is livestock. This means larger herds, more pressure to prevent and retaliate against predation by lions and wild dogs, more competition with native fauna and, perhaps worst of all, the beginning of a new trend to demarcate land with fences. In a land of confined movement, who knows how wild dogs' viability will be affected. As tiny needles in a colossal haystack, it is already a wonder how they meet to mate without having the imposition of barriers as an added concern. The way ahead lies with keeping options open, and the Kenya Wildlife Service faces the daunting task of finding where the balance lies between preserving and permitting the use of natural resources in the effort to maintain biodiversity. The future of the dogs also raises some specific ethical and managerial questions for the service to consider, particularly in relation to handling policy. Should we take the risk of collaring? If not, will we ever have the information needed to keep on track with a good conservation strategy? Moreover, breakthroughs have been made in the development of a reliable vaccine against canine distemper, boasting the most promising defence yet against this curse. Its administration, combined with a rabies immunisation programme could mean the difference between immediate life and death for wild dogs. Should Kenya adopt the pro-collaring policy of Tanzania?

It is not possible to say what lies around the corner, but one thing is certain: public attitudes towards wild dogs will continue to mould our efforts to the same degree that they have always done. Over time, such attitudes have taken an important shift away from perceiving wild dogs as pests and ruthless killers. People are beginning to appreciate them with the incredulity they deserve, choosing not to discount them just because we may not be able to fully sense their place and importance in the web of life. The opportunities open to wild dog conservation in Kajiado are thanks in part to the respect that the Maasai of Elangata Wuas have shown so far towards their natural heritage. Perhaps we should learn to emulate them.



**'Their research implements are modest but effective, consisting of a camera, good binoculars, data collection sheets, some accurate grid maps and, most important, their mother tongue.'**

*Karin Dougherty is a purser aboard KLM Airlines and a board member of the Dutch branch of EAWLS. The Kajiado Wild Dog Project is her initiative. Wholly voluntary, it is funded partly by her salary and partly by a Dutch Foundation she has set up for wild dogs.*

*Nigel Dougherty is a Kenyan conservationist with a zoology degree from Oxford University, England. He has worked primarily on elephant conservation and is now studying veterinary medicine at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.*

# Working Towards a New Solution

The 7,300 square kilometres of Laikipia District north-west of Mount Kenya boast more wildlife outside protected areas than anywhere else in Kenya. To protect their resource, local landowners have banded together, writes *Sacha Cook*.

**R**ECOGNISING THE URGENT NEED TO preserve the fragile ecosystem of Laikipia as a national and international asset, the area's landowners and residents, intent on conserving and sustainably utilising the area's wildlife, have formed a non-profit company, the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), formally registered in Kenya. With regular meetings in conjunction with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), residents are playing a key role in the management and future conservation of the area's wildlife.

Laikipia District has been divided into six units, each with an annually elected director from within the unit whose primary responsibility is to promote wildlife-related projects and to assist the unit's members achieve their goals. LWF has also recently employed an executive officer for fund raising, administration, marketing and public relations. No other association in East Africa has made such a progressive start in involving local communities in managing the wildlife on their land.

There are a number of areas where LWF is actively seeking to influence future developments in Laikipia. One example is its campaign to end the

practice of land subdivision. With the region's population growing at over four percent, increasing pressure is being put on the environment as the demand for land grows. Large areas suffer as the land is subdivided and allocated to smallholders to farm with the expectation that they will be able to live sustainably from the land. Since the Laikipia region is predominantly semi-arid savannah with low agricultural potential, subdivision quickly results in rapid habitat degradation, especially from deforestation and soil erosion. Reversing the land use system from subdivided small-scale farms back to a conservation

area is virtually impossible.

LWF is actively campaigning at the local level to try to stop subdivision and persuade people to opt for a more economically sustainable form of income generation which will improve a community's economic status by revenue earned from both nonconsumptive and consumptive wildlife utilisation. Since many of the wild herbivore species migrate over geographical boundaries that exceed any one individual's land, it is essential to establish conservation areas large enough to prevent the creation of fenced in islands of wildlife.

One way LWF hopes to spread its message is through education. Within Laikipia there are 224 primary schools attended by approximately 720,000 pupils being taught by 2,500 teachers. There are also 28 secondary schools with another 6,000 students and 500 teachers. With little to no environmental education in the school curriculum, outside programmes are required to informally teach the students environmental awareness. LWF's first act involving the whole community was to hold a secondary schools competition to design the LWF logo.

The most fundamental people in any education centre are the teachers. In order for LWF to make a long-term impact on future generations, it must help teachers grasp the basic concept and reasoning behind the need to preserve the environment. This is being achieved through regular workshops and seminars, while revenue earned by LWF's wildlife utilisation will be channelled back into upgrading existing education centres and providing bursaries to students.

Educating the inhabitants of Laikipia about conservation is only one aspect of LWF's activities. Since receiving official registration in January 1996, LWF has been promoting the concept of 'hands on'

**'Large areas suffer as the land is subdivided and allocated to smallholders to farm with the expectation that they will be able to live sustainably.'**

land management. As a non-profit company, LWF in conjunction with KWS, advises land owners how to manage and conserve Laikipia's environment to benefit both human and wildlife interests.

To manage wildlife on such a large scale, aerial and ground counts of wildlife are an essential management tool. In conjunction with KWS and the Mpala Research Centre, LWF coordinated the first dry season total count of wildlife in Laikipia, and in June 1996 carried out a similar wet season count. The level of commitment from Laikipia's land owners was demonstrated by the voluntary donation of five aircraft for the surveys. The data provided is fundamental to forming sustainable management policies and will be used for much more than setting annual cropping quotas. The data will be analysed to estimate the extent of seasonal migrations, distribution and dynamics.

Currently, game cropping is the only source of wildlife-based revenue for many group ranches. LWF, therefore, is assisting with funding, motivation and guidance in promoting sustainable practice in this area. This year, KWS issued LWF with a quota for the district based on an average of ten percent of the aerial count figures. As an experiment in the northern unit, LWF issued the zebra quota on a per-acre basis to encourage a wider revenue sharing

system. A cropping unit is being set up to travel the area cropping wild game and training game scouts on community-owned ranches. Eventually it is hoped the group ranches will manage their own wildlife.

Since not everyone in Laikipia is intent on conserving wildlife, and there are areas where wildlife is more of a liability than an asset, some areas will receive increased cropping quotas each year until there is no game remaining. Meanwhile, in less developed areas, where game is both more plentiful and more compatible with prevailing land use, LWF will actively promote ecotourism.

Laikipia Wildlife Forum has taken up the challenge of intelligently and sustainably managing Laikipia's wildlife. It hopes to become a model association for the rest of Kenya to follow. With a step-by-step approach LWF is building a solid organisation to play a key role in conserving Laikipia's environment. If Kenya develops more associations like LWF throughout the country to effectively manage wildlife on private land, it will be a great step forward.

**'Land owners realise the urgent need to preserve this fragile ecosystem as a national and international asset.'**

**If you need a more personalised and individual service for Safaris in East Africa, we believe we can give you the very best.**



From the heights of snowcapped Mount Kenya and Kilimanjaro down through the Ngorongoro crater and Serengeti Plains, across Lake Victoria and finally to the beautiful Indian Ocean, Let's Go Travel are the knowledgeable experts who will tailor East Africa Safaris exactly to your requirements. Please contact us on Nairobi 254-2-340331/213033 or fax Nairobi 254-2 336890/214713 and you will receive our most prompt attention.

**Let's Go Travel**



Head Office: Caxton House, Standard Street, P.O. Box 60342, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 340331/213033, Fax: 336890/214713.  
Branches: Karen - above Karen Provision Store Tel: 882168/882505  
Westlands - The Mall, 2nd Floor, Tel: 441030

**MARA BY AIR**

Take a break. Fly to Mara from Nairobi. Land at Olkurruk Mara Lodge. Enjoy the panoramic view of the Mara plains and see the spectacular migration of wildebeest. Fly back the next day or continue the experience.



**RELAX & ENJOY**

**MOUNT KENYA EXPRESS**

Escape to the Highest Altitude Resort Mountain Lodge, set on the slopes of Mt. Kenya. This treehotel with a floodlit waterhole and salt lick offers you endless time of game viewing from the comfort of the Lodge.

**TWO OUTSTANDING HOLIDAY OPTIONS**

**From 5th June - 15th Dec.**



**AFRICAN TOURS & HOTELS LIMITED**  
FOR BOOKINGS, CALL CHRIS AT AFRICAN TOURS & HOTEL CENTRAL RESERVATIONS  
TEL. NO: 336858 OR 223283 NAIROBI.

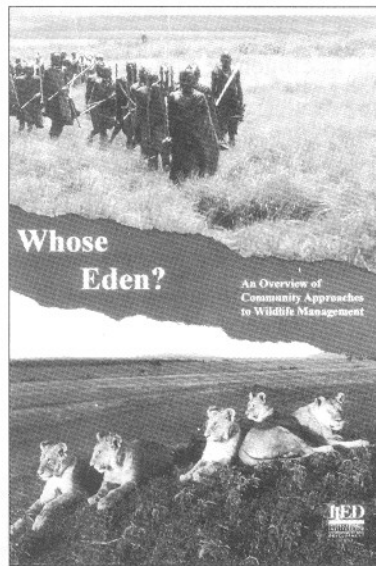
BIKEN

# Whose Eden?

A new look at community-based conservation. *Review by Mwamba Shete.*

## **Whose Eden? An Overview of Community Approaches to Wildlife Management.**

*Published by the International Institute for Environment and Development (U.K) for the British Overseas Development Administration.*



**F**IRST, DO NOT BE MISLED BY THE beautiful cover representing wildlife and local communities. There are no other photographs inside. The book is technical and aimed at a limited audience. In fact, I felt the title could be changed to 'A Guide to Community Approaches to Wildlife Management for Governments and Non-governmental Organisations in Africa.'

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the research was through a desk survey, a lot of invaluable information has been included in this comprehensive book. A wide range of examples and case studies have been used and this makes the book very good for wildlife managers. Wildlife has been approached from a wider perspective ranging from fishes to forests and to savannah ecosystems. It is a relief to read a book that looks beyond the big five when examining wildlife and local communities.

The details are frank and factual, emphasising previous mistakes made by wildlife managers. The damage done to local communities during the colonial era and also through the nationalisation and globalisation of wildlife resources has not been hidden, neither have the mistakes made by expatriate experts. Though the politics of conservation issues has been downplayed it also has not been totally missed out.

Every wildlife institution dealing with wildlife and local communities should have a copy for reference. The same applies for managers so that they can widen their horizons and have more options while carrying out their duties.

With such a good book it is hard to pick the bad areas but I feel that would not be fair to conservation. Throughout the book there is no mention of the Rio Declaration where governments committed themselves to doing more for their environments. The Convention of Biological Diversity has been ratified by several countries and recognizes the role of local communities in wildlife management. A mention of this would strengthen the book.

Many case studies appear to have been provided by project executives whose positive conclusions sometimes belie African reality. It would have been better if some local non-partisan bodies had been involved. Also, the mention and involvement of indigenous wildlife non-governmental bodies is insignificant. We appreciate the role played by international organisations such as WWF and IUCN. It is however misleading to produce a document with a strong bias in Africa that has very few African players. There are wildlife and environmental societies in several countries that could have provided a local perspective. The same applies even for the individual interviewees. A few local community leaders could have given their contribution directly instead of through a secondary source whose agenda could have been different.

Lastly the issue of corruption and mismanagement in Africa has been skirted around. Many well-meaning programmes have failed because of this and also because of the political climate. Politics in Africa are different and permeate every facet of peoples lives.

However, the book is professional and gives some good guidelines which have generally been lacking, with many parties working haphazardly with local communities. It has come out at a time when community issues are high on the environmental agenda and cannot be ignored. The role of communities in determining the future of the world's biodiversity is too important and any serious individual or institution should acquire a copy. ✎

# The Next Generation

**Louisa Lockwood reviews the sequel to *Echo of the Elephants***

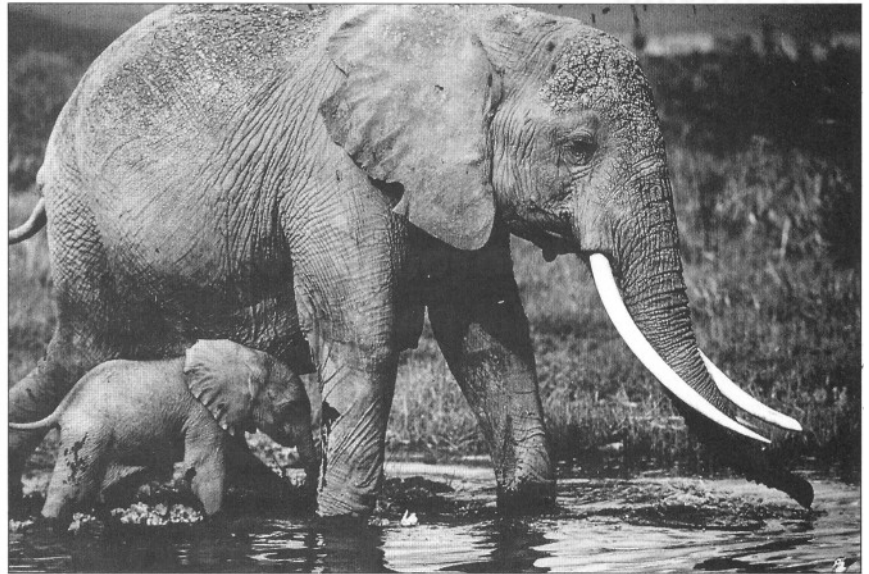
**T**HE QUESTION FOR THE NAIROBI audience of the first screening of Martyn Colbeck and Cynthia Moss' new film was whether a second collaboration could come close to the power of their first documentary, 1993's *Echo of the Elephants*. Certainly the tension of those days, as Echo's newborn calf Ely struggled to walk, and thus to survive, was compelling screen drama, and would be hard to match.

*Echo of the Elephants: The Next Generation* is a less compact drama than *Echo of the Elephants*, possibly because it shows a wider variety of elephant behaviour and personality. But after the first fairly bland ten minutes of scene-setting, the film becomes as fascinating as its predecessor. The Nairobi audience watched in growing awe as Echo, the matriarch, led her family in search of food, water and safety. It is a challenge to keep such an audience entertained by wildlife footage as many of them have been virtually brought up on safari, but *Echo of the Elephants: The Next Generation's* footage of bulls fighting and the scenes of mud-larking, lovemaking and kidnapping showed things few had seen before.

Kidnapping? Apparently this is not such an unusual event between elephant families. *The Next Generation* shows Echo giving birth to a female calf, Ebony, younger sister of Ely, and it is this calf that is taken by another family in a show of dominance. The calf-knappers trap the bewildered elephant amongst a jungle of trunks and long limbs whilst the matriarch and two relatives, like lieutenants, easily resist Echo and her eldest daughter's attempts to retrieve the calf. Returning with reinforcements and determination, Echo and the family are not about to give in, and soon they break through the tight ranks liberating Ebony, who is quickly glad of a familiar nipple to suckle.

The other most remarkable scene in the film was of what elephants get up to at night, a question that has intrigued Cynthia Moss for quite some time. Shooting in moonlight, Colbeck captured the unusual grace of the large mammals as they lowered their bulk to the ground and actually slept flat out on their sides for about five to six hours. The matriarch is naturally the last to get down and the first to rise.

This was a second documentary in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, home to the longest-studied elephant groups in the world and a source of



invaluable data. The loss of some of the oldest male elephants to sport hunters just across the Tanzanian border in December 1994 brought an added urgency to the making of the film and an added poignancy on screen. Would the magnificent bull, Dionysus, return to the park in the dry season or had he too strayed into Tanzania and met with the same death?

He came back, and was met by the other bulls with unusual excitement. Dionysus went on to mate with a younger female from Echo's group. When young and inexperienced she had rebuffed all Dionysus' advances, running away and breaking a bone in her lower leg in the process (we were kept in suspense wondering if she had survived ... and if Martyn and Cynthia had forgotten about her!). But survive she did, albeit with a limp and an endearing way of supporting her leg on a log when resting. This time, the six tons of Dionysus easily wins over her one ton and we are treated to the sight of her highly-excited relations galumphing about and trumpeting their approval.

So the story of Echo and her remarkable family continues. Cynthia Moss's deep knowledge of elephants has yet again guided film maker Martyn Colbeck through the labyrinth of elephant behaviour to bring the full pageant of their lives to the small screen. Let's hope this is not the last instalment of the saga, but like all the best soap operas, it will run and run and run.

**Echo and Ely in 1993. Three years later, Ely has a new sister, Ebony.**

*Photograph:  
Cynthia Moss*

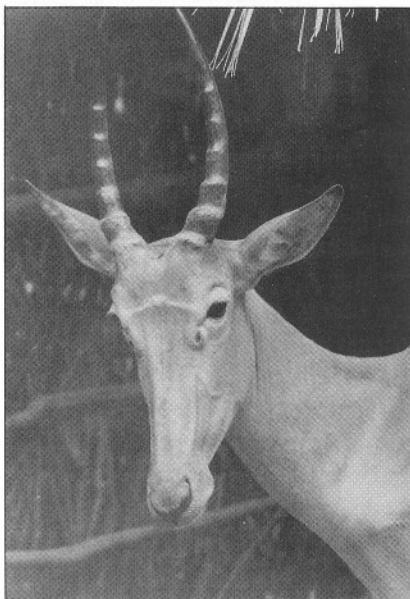
## Project Update:

# New Hope for the Hirola

Translocation should inject some new blood into Tsavo's hirola population, writes *Richard Kock*.

**The hirola: Now endemic only to Kenya since civil war destroyed the Somali population**

*Photograph: Des Bartlett*



**T**HE HIROLA, KNOWN ALSO AS THE hunter's antelope, is one of the world's most threatened ungulates. It is also the most endangered antelope species in Africa, critically so. The confirmed wild population, estimated at a minimum of 302 individuals in 1995, is confined to the Tana, Garissa and Lamu Districts of Kenya. There is only one hirola alive in captivity.

The hirola has engagingly and accurately been described as looking like a hartebeest with the horns of an impala. It has a rufous-tan or sandy coat, which may become grey with age in males, a distinctive inverted white chevron between the eyes and prominent suborbital glands. Its tail is white for much of its length. An introduced population exists in Tsavo

East National Park, between 150 and 200 kilometres south of the hirola's natural range. This population was established in 1963 by the translocation and hard release of up to 30 animals. The precise figure is not documented, but film and diary archives suggest fewer than 30 survived the release. This "Operation Hunter's" was carried out by the Kenyan Game Department with the assistance of the East African Wildlife Society and other organisations and individuals. Animals were released in the Dika Plains area of Tsavo National Park, between Aruba Lodge and Buchuma Gate south of the Voi River. To date, fifty-six animals survive in this area.

To conserve the hirola, a three-pronged strategy is necessary. First, *in situ* populations in Kenya must be protected and the hirola must be re-established in Somalia. Second, translocated populations in Kenya must be conserved. Third, an international breeding programme must be established.

However, since the security situation in the hirola's natural range is not conducive to conserving *in situ* populations in the short term, and since the status of the translocated population in Tsavo remains precarious, *ex situ* conservation measures were agreed by the National Task Force set up to consider the hirola problem. The Task Force recommended that options for establishing a translocated population within Kenya should be examined first. Such a population would have to be established in natural or

semi-natural conditions, and Tsavo was selected as the most promising site. This translocation effort will amount to an effective reinforcement of the existing Tsavo population. The benefits will include genetic improvement and increased potential for the growth of the population, which was not increasing at an optimal rate.

Sufficient funds have been raised for the translocation, scheduled for July 25, 1996. Family groups totalling thirty animals will be chosen from areas where their remoteness or vulnerability indicate a low probability of persistence. This will also reduce disturbance to the core population. The animals will be translocated to Tsavo East National Park. If the approach proves successful, further translocations will be made to Tsavo and elsewhere. The translocated population will be radio-collared and intensively monitored so future decisions on *ex situ* conservation measures can be rationally made. Considerable effort will also be expended over the coming months on raising community awareness in the hirola's home range areas and encouraging *in situ* conservation measures.

The hirola has been poorly researched and, until recently, little effort has been expended on its conservation. Now the hirola's status is known more accurately, long-term strategies can be developed to benefit this animal and other sharing this beautiful and wild corner of Kenya. Considerable funds will be needed to carry out the many activities that can ensure this species' future, and support from local and international communities will be essential. ♀

### More Funds for Hirola

EAWLS is proud to announce the receipt of £6,000 sterling from the St. Katherine's Fund, U.K. towards the Hirola Project. The Society has been actively involved in the battle to prevent the hirola antelope's extinction since the first hirola translocation in 1963.

In 1976, EAWLS funded a study on the numbers, distribution and density of hirolas in Garissa and Lamu Districts. After monitoring the situation for some years, a subsequent study was launched in 1993 to update our knowledge of the hirola's status.

EAWLS currently acts as the secretariat for hirola conservation efforts in Kenya.

*Richard Kock is the senior veterinary advisor for the Kenya Wildlife Service.*

# Society Highlights:

## EAWLS 'Save the Forests' Forum

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN AN ALARMING rate of forest destruction in Kenya. A recent IUCN report revealed that since 1986, 46,944 hectares have been lost. What is shocking is that even gazetted forests have not been spared. Among the woodlands currently under threat are Arabuko-Sokoke, Mount Kenya and Nairobi's Ngong Road, Ololua and City Park forests.

This is a national crisis. If the trend continues it will have far-reaching environmental repercussions. Existing policies, laws and agreements governing forest resources simply do not appear to work and, despite a huge public outcry, no solution is in sight.

Therefore, EAWLS decided to host a "Save the Forests" public discussion on April 24 at the National Museum. The aim was to promote awareness of Kenya's forests' value and current status, to register public concern and to help the audience see the role they can play in advocating better forest management.

The well-attended forum included representatives of numerous local and international NGOs, government institutions, business people as well as members of the public and the Society. Speakers included Dr. Peter Wass, former director of the Kenya Indigenous Forest Conservation Programme; G.O. Ochieng and R. Gikonyo, deputy directors of the Forest Department and G. Githara, KWS's Forest Coordinator.

Dr. Imre Loeffler, EAWLS vice-president, unable to attend due to an accident, asked the Society's chief executive, Nehemiah Rotich, to deliver an enthusiastically-received treatise on "Forests and Corruption." Dr. Loeffler's paper described an imaginary subsaharan country whose forests were being destroyed. He blamed corruption as the main destructive force. According to him, corruption in developing countries is "most pervasive regarding natural resources. Corruption is not only bribing and law breaking. Laws, rules and orders themselves can be corrupt."

Opening the proceedings, Mr. Rotich expressed the Society's concern about the plight of Kenya's forests and stressed the importance of the Save the Forests campaign. "This campaign is different to the Save the Rhino and other similar crusades," he pointed out. "The extinction of the rhinoceros would have been a great moral defeat, but the survival of *Homo sapiens* would not have been affected. The disappearance of forests threatens our species."

Dr. Wass concentrated on the importance of forests to people and the environment while the officials from the Forest Department talked about the current status of Kenya's forests and introduced the government's new policies. These were received with scepticism by the audience, many of whom felt current problems had little to do with policies. During the question and answer session open to the audience, the Forest Department representatives had a difficult time convincing people that the new policy would work. Many felt that commitment to existing policies was what was needed to slow down or halt the continued destruction of the forests, a sentiment echoed by the Society's chairman, Dr. Theuri Njoka, in his closing remarks.

## Environmental Hotline

A REMINDER THAT THE UGANDAN Environmental Hotline is open from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. every working day on 041 233061, Kampala, Uganda. According to the Ugandan Constitution, "every citizen is called upon to create and protect a clean and healthy environment." The hotline is a means to report such things as encroachment on protected areas, the killing of wildlife, wetland degradation and indiscriminate waste dumping so the information can be passed on to the relevant government ministries, local authorities and environmental management agencies. We hope to introduce a fax service soon.

## New Sponsorship

A WELCOME ADDITION TO OUR LIST OF sponsors is Barclaytrust Investment Services Ltd., P.O. Box 30356, Nairobi. A subsidiary of Barclays Bank PLC, Barclaytrust Investment Services provides a comprehensive range of corporate and financial services including portfolio and deposit management, executor and trusteeships, provident and pension fund management and global custody services.

Barclaytrust Investment Services have provided a boost to our conservation efforts which is sincerely appreciated.

Also appreciated is the recent upgrading of Securicor Kenya's membership of the Society to corporate contributor status.

# The Last Word:

# Write to Swara Write for Swara!

SWARA IS THE FOREMOST ENVIRONMENTAL and wildlife magazine in East Africa for a reason. It has some of the best-informed contributors and reaches the most knowledgeable and influential people in East African conservation. Its readership is stretches across the globe, and the issues it raises in each edition affect us all, not only here in East Africa, but worldwide.

Perhaps the most compelling reason for us to publish, and for you to read, *Swara* is that it is an unparalleled forum for debate. In these pages you can not only find out what is happening in the world of conservation, but you can make your own voice heard. *Swara* is your magazine.

Whether you are active in wildlife research and policy making or simply an interested and concerned bystander, *Swara* wants to hear from you. Your letters, articles and article ideas keep the conservation debate alive. Your opinions matter and your experiences are important.

So, let us know what concerns you and what excites you. Who you disagree with. What you agree with. Where you have been that inspires you. And also, what you think of *Swara*.

Let us know if *Swara* is meeting your needs. What do you look for in *Swara* every other month? And are you finding it?

Don't forget, *Swara* is *your* magazine, reflecting your concerns and feeding your curiosity. Without your support, there would be no *Swara* and no East African Wild Life Society.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

David Simpson, Editor

## Correction

The article, "Giraffe Rescue in Amboseli," (*Swara* Vol. 19 No.2) was written, not by Graham Nicholls, but by Ian Vincent. Our apologies go to both parties for any embarrassment caused.

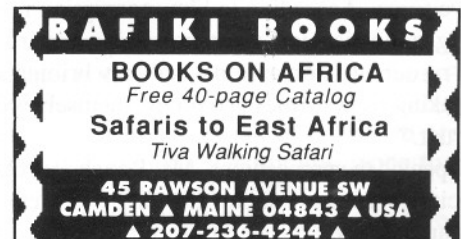


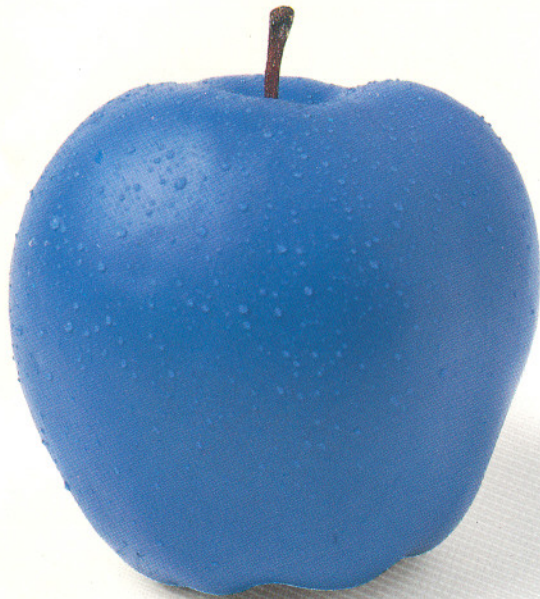
*East Africa Beckons You!*

INTERIOR NATURALIST SAFARI LTD

Offers you well-planned and organised safaris all over East Africa giving you the most wonderful experience and a lifetime adventure.

P. O. BOX 60862  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel: 254 - 2 - 217141  
Fax: 254 - 2 - 217141





## Have you ever seen a blue apple?

Of course not. That's because apples are red, or green or golden yellow.

But for us, at Prepress, apples can be  or 

It's the way we see things that makes a difference.

A difference that sets us apart from the ordinary.

If you want to see a blue apple step out of the ordinary

*and come to the extraordinary.*

DESIGN PHOTOGRAPHY COLOUR SEPARATIONS  
PO BOX 39676 NAIROBI KENYA TEL: 442702 442426 442566

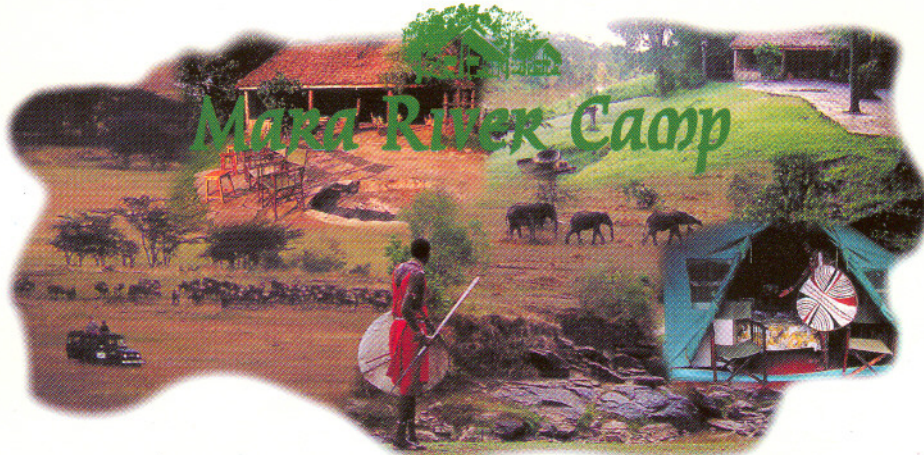
**PREPRESS**  
PRODUCTIONS



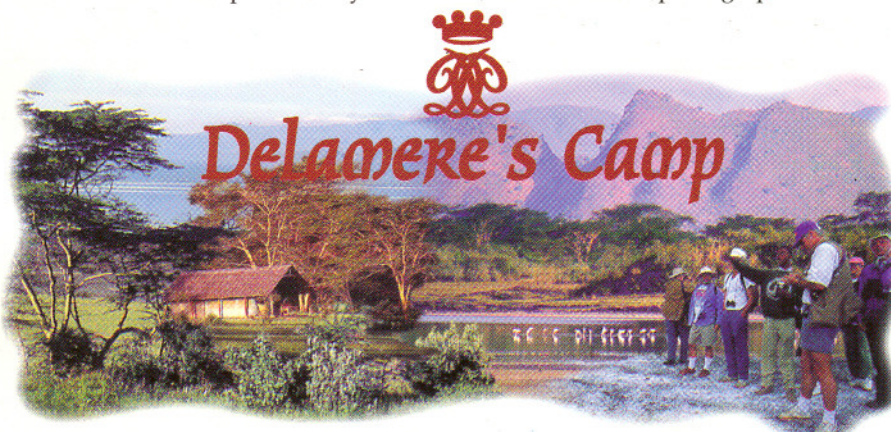
# SAVANNAH

## CAMPS & LODGES

A selection of small tented camps & lodges on private land in some of Kenya's most scenic wildlife areas.



Perfectly situated on a beautiful forested bend of the Mara River, is a small, comfortable and friendly tented camp with a wonderful natural ambience - preferred by film crews, naturalists and photographers.



Enjoy informative nature walks, spectacular evening sundowners on the Sugonoi cliffs and exciting night-time game drives around Lake Elmenteita's Soysambu Wildlife Sanctuary.



The Ngare Sergoi Rhino Sanctuary, at Lewa Downs in the northern foothills of Mount Kenya is an unforgettable combination of hospitality, privacy, spectacular scenery, and abundant wildlife.

Also pictured Tiva River, Sangare Ranch and Indian Ocean Lodge.