

APRIL - JUNE 2014

# SWARA



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- For UK, we have now registered East African Wild Life Society (UK) as a UK Registered Charity (Charity No. 1153041). Donations would be entitled to tax relief. EAWLS (UK) has a dedicated bank account and the details can be provided by contacting Nigel Hunter at: [Nigel.Hunter@eawildlife.org](mailto:Nigel.Hunter@eawildlife.org) if you are interested in making a bank transfer. If you wish to use the cheque option, then these should be made out to East African Wild Life Society (UK) and sent to Mrs Emma Stewart, Townend of Grange, Dunlop, Kilmarnock, KA3 4EG
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Prince William addresses conservationists at the London conference

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**F**or the first time in several years, news and features from Kenya, our home base, dominate an issue of SWARA. We've deliberately

tried to widen our geographical story base over the years to illustrate what conservation challenges other countries in Africa are facing, overcoming and succumbing to. But this issue is dominated by stories about Kenya, from the ocean to the rangelands, because Kenya is synonymous in so many people's minds with wildlife and conservation, and all the problems that entails in the 21st century.

Stories about poaching and wildlife crime make unhappy reading but are phenomena that we have to face up to if anything is going to be done to

reverse current trends. The London conference kicks off our coverage and highlights the horror people feel from far away about the slaughter going on across this continent. It is heartening to see our own Ian Douglas-Hamilton and Paula Kahumbu get the recognition they deserve for driving the issue up the international agenda, where it belongs. Heartening too is the fact that the issues are now firmly on the agenda of the media at home and abroad. Thank you Her Excellency First lady Margaret Kenyatta for putting your name and face to these campaigns. We hope to have an article by her in the next issue (July, 2014-03).

EAWLS exists to lobby for prudent use of our natural resources and all those who share it. Which makes Nicky Parazzi's article on turtles all the more poignant. Did you know that up to 40% of the world's population lives close to a shoreline? That's the kind of statistic that illustrates the potential for catastrophe at the coast unless proper

planning, policy and thinking becomes part of building for the future.

And what is the point of policy, planning or thinking unless laws are implemented? It is not enough to have them on the statute books. Wildlife Direct's admirable study of around 750 cases in court shows us, shockingly, that less than 4% of people who make money out of dead animals or animal parts ever go to jail. Is this what Kenya at 50 is all about? How devastating for the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) ranger who brought a suspect in only to learn that he or she has escaped with minimal inconvenience and is free to poach or traffick again. What sort of message does that send to the organized wildlife crime syndicates? Certainly not the message that the London conference wanted to transmit – that the world has had enough and is cracking down with determination. We have legal teeth. Let's use them. ●

**Andy Hill, Editor**

### THE LAST SAVANNA

*As ivory poachers are gunning down Africa's last elephants, ex-SAS officer Ian MacAdam leads a commando squad against them, only to find they have kidnapped a young archaeologist, Rebecca Hecht, whom he once loved and bitterly lost. He embarks on a desperate trek to save not only Rebecca but his own soul in an Africa torn apart by wars, overpopulation and the slaughter of its last wildlife.*

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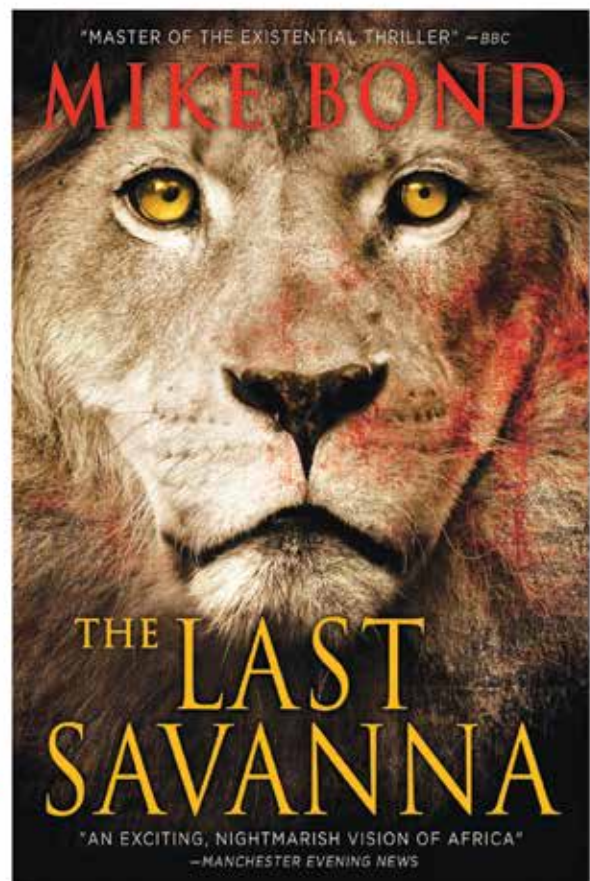
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**Dear Editor,**

**Ringnet Fishing**

In reference to Steve Trott's article on ringnet fishing in coral reef areas of Kenya (SWARA Jan.-Mar. 2014), I have noticed this for years in the supposed Diani Marine National Reserve in front of my home. I have never seen anyone from the Department of Fisheries or KWS come to stop them. As the photos show, they even use fine-mesh nets just off the beach inside of the reef and take their catch on shore where they sell fish to passers-by. In a few years there will be nothing left and the local fishing communities will be bereft of a living. It is past time when illegal gear is confiscated and sustainable fishing practices are instituted. ●

**Dan Stiles  
Diani Beach**

**Dear Editor,**

I was excited and intrigued when I looked at the cover of SWARA (January-March 2014) and saw the feature "The next generation of conservationists talk". I wondered who they are, whether I knew them personally (I hoped I did!) and most importantly, to read what they had to say. My reasoning was that the term 'next generation' referred to new perspectives, improved insights and abilities, sort of like 'generations' in terms of mobile phones (pardon the comparison) where you had 1G, 2G, 3G etc. I was however taken aback to find that the (very thoughtful and

interesting) article by Storm Stanley was actually about the 'offspring of the leading first generation of conservationists'. This was breathtaking but highly necessary reality check for the conservation sector in Kenya and Africa as a whole. It is (or should be!) a rude awakening for conservation scholars and practitioners that the feudal origins of wildlife consumption and (in this case) conservation practice still exist in our thinking. I am of the opinion that if Mordecai Ogada is called to as a conservationist, then those who refer to him as such are not doing so because of his parentage. Who will write about the thoughts of

the many conservationists who cannot claim the sort of lineages shared by the individuals covered in this article? Nobody can take away from any of the great achievements and well-deserved accolades of both the generations covered in your articles, but the only way to progress is to break out of this mould. The biggest challenge facing conservation in much of Africa currently is the fact that like hunting used to be in feudal societies, it is an unapologetically elitist pursuit. ●

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Completed forms with payments must for security reasons be sent c/o one of these Society Representatives:

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# Some Grounds for Optimism on Global Fight Against Wildlife Poaching and Extermination

Frequent readers of this magazine are aware that I have written several letters on the threats from poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products. In my previous letters, I have emphasized that this threat has a global dimension which calls for collective actions by countries affected by and/or benefiting from the chain of poaching, trade and markets for wildlife and wildlife products.

For new readers, I have stated before that: "By far, the most worrying driver of wildlife poaching and illegal trade are the external markets which have opened up in the last few years, particularly in China and far east. Larger quantities of illegal shipment of Elephant tusks and Rhino horns are illegally traded as more countries in the sub-region engage in development partnership, trade and tourism ventures with China. Of course, it would be naïve to argue that our countries should refrain from development partnership with China. However, we have to face this new challenge of a huge market for wildlife products posing a threat to our wildlife populations. The long term solution may lie in measures to reduce the market through recourse to use of alternative non wildlife products. This would entail effective public education in that large new market. However, if we wait for that to happen, we will have lost our wildlife populations in this part of Africa".

A few readers responded to my previous letters rather negatively, arguing that I was trying to shift the blame away from poor governance in the wildlife-rich developing countries such as Kenya to developed countries offering large markets like China. I found little reason to press my argument in that direction any further. Instead, I pressed for direct engagement between our Society and the conservation fraternity in major

market countries. In this regard, I am most encouraged by the progress that the EAWLS has made in linking up with conservation groups in China. I wish to commend our Executive Director, Michael Gachanja, for pioneering working linkages with wildlife conservation groups in China.

But, I am more encouraged by the recent actions taken by countries around the world to address this threat to wildlife. Last November, the United States of America's Fish and Wildlife Agency carried out its first public burning of illegally collected wildlife products in its commitment to eradicate the vice. Shortly after this event, China followed with action on similar lines. The affirmative action by China was a turning point since the country is the world's largest market for wildlife products. The action by China offered grounds for optimism among environmental and conservation groups around the world. Indeed, as EAWLS, we are now proud to be linking up with conservation groups in China.

Moreover, many countries are taking commendable actions to stem wildlife poaching and illegal trade. The United

Kingdom recently convened a high level meeting attended by several developing and developed countries to address wildlife poaching. Tanzania has recently mobilized country-wide security checks to control wildlife poaching. Kenya has enacted a wildlife law which entails long imprisonment and/or heavy fines for poachers. The president of Uganda has just issued a "shoot-to-kill" order on wildlife poachers.

Other countries are taking even more radical action to control wildlife poaching and illegal trade. For example, recent reports highlight that Indonesia's top Islamic body (Ulema Council) has issued religious fatwa against illegal hunting and trade in endangered animals in the country.

If the current global attention and actions on controlling wildlife poaching and illegal trade are sustained, there is new hope for wildlife conservation. However, for some wildlife species already threatened with extinction, this window of optimism may not apply. It may already be too late. ●

**Fredrick Owino**  
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# Tourism and unplanned development threaten Maasai Mara Game Reserve



**T**he Maasai Mara National Reserve is regarded by many as the most popular wildlife destination in Kenya, particularly during the months the Wildebeest and Zebra move into and spend time in the Mara. As a consequence the Reserve is Kenya's most visited site. But all is not well and unless some urgent action is taken, the Mara will be lost to Kenya as one of the wonders of the world and its status as a World Heritage Site will be meaningless. The problems and issues the Mara faces can be summarised as follows:

**Over-development:** This has come about because of a total lack of regard to following the provisions of the Environment Management and Co-ordination Act (EMCA), which require an (EIA), public input and a Nema Licence issued, for any drop within a protected area. As a result there are a considerable number of illegal

developments – some positioned in ecologically sensitive areas. We thus have no regard for the tourist carrying capacity of the reserve and for the ecological sustainability of this landscape. There is also a lot of development on small parcels of land outside the reserve. This is different from development in the private conservancies, and is aimed at the budget tourism market, by avoiding the costs attached with staying in a conservancy or within the reserve. These establishments drive the cost per bed night down across the board. They also add to the overcrowding problem in Maasai Mara Game Reserve. Of the 200 cars at a wildebeest crossing, perhaps more than half have come from properties outside the reserve.

**Overcrowding:** This stems from the overdevelopment issue as the number of people and vehicles visiting the park are causing a complete lack of respect for minimising disturbance to the wildlife. For example it is not an exaggeration to have over 200 vehicles lined up to watch the Wildebeest cross the Mara River and as the animals begin their crossing to have every car start its engine and surge forward to the river bank – often causing the Wildebeest to stop their crossing.

**Misuse of revenues:** Over several decades, the Narok Council has received millions of US dollars per year by way of revenues. There is little or no evidence of any of those revenues being invested in infrastructure maintenance or improvement; invested in community development or invested in reducing the costs born by local communities bordering the reserve, such as improving night time bomas so that domestic livestock are at a lower risk from lion predation.

**Overgrazing:** Because of a history of the Narok Council failing to involve communities living next to the reserve in terms of benefit sharing, reducing human- wildlife conflict, etc., there is a complete disregard for the importance of this National Reserve in terms of a biodiversity resource underpinning Kenya's economic well being. This has engendered strong local resentment and when the grazing outside the reserve is no longer adequate, large numbers of domestic livestock are introduced into the reserve to take advantage of the better grazing inside.

**Other issues:** These four issues, should not imply no other issues exist. There is the growing problem of an invasive species known as Parthenium, which is predicted to have a serious detrimental impact on the grazing quality of the Reserve. Then there are external factors such as the recent desire of the Tanzanian Government to build a tarmac highway only some 30kms south of the Mara Reserve, without any regard to the consequences to this ecosystem. These issues are contributing to the lowering of Mara as a high wildlife tourism destination and if not checked this downward trend will continue and the golden egg will disappear.

## Time to address the issues

An opportunity to address the problem through the new Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 exists. This Act introduces the following new elements:

- No development will be approved in the absence of a gazetted management plan.
- The 5th Schedule articulates what a management plan must contain, including reference to tourist carrying capacities. In addition

the plan must detail the participation of neighbouring communities in the preparation of the plan.

- In addition to the requirement to articulate the incentives and benefit sharing that will be applied and distributed, at least 5% of the benefits from the Reserve shall be allocated to neighbouring communities.

These elements will help us work towards solving the issues outlined above. For EAWLS to undertake a lead in this advocacy initiative, a partnership with the tourism sector to ensure that good and accurate information is available, is needed. Nothing undermines advocacy work more than bad information. We are also seeking a commitment from the tourism players to undertake the advocacy work in a joined up manner in to achieve success by using reason and persuasion. Getting financial support to ensure there are adequate funds to see the work through to completion is also required. I am therefore making an appeal to our members to support this advocacy initiative for the Mara and other tourist destinations in East Africa. ●

**Michael Gachanja**  
Executive Director

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## SURVEY SHOWS WEAK LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST KENYAN WILDLIFE CRIME

Pressure for stricter implementation of Kenya's anti-poaching and game trafficking laws is bound to increase after a landmark report by Wildlife Direct showing that only 4% of offenders convicted of wildlife crimes went to jail.

The report, covering January 2008 to June 2013, examines a total of 743 pending and closed cases in the registries of courts in towns close to key conservation areas such as Amboseli, Isiolo, Laikipia, Maasai Mara, Samburu and Tsavo, as well as major ports.

"A major finding of the study was that in total, only 4% of offenders convicted of wildlife crimes went to jail. In cases of offences against elephants and rhinos which can potentially attract jail sentences of up to 10 years, only 7% of offenders in this category were jailed. Though there were frequent news reports of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officers being arrested for involvement in these crimes, the study did not find a

single verdict that highlighted this problem," the report says.

"The study clearly showed that wildlife related crime in Kenya is treated as a misdemeanour or petty crime and is 'mismanaged' within the Kenyan court systems. Of the 743 cases registered, 70% of the case files were reported missing or misplaced in the courts. Only 202 files were available to the study team for perusal, and these were of cases against 314 offenders that had been concluded.

"224 offenders (78%) were found guilty of crimes ranging from illegal hunting, illegal possessions of weapons with intent to kill animals, trespassing in protected areas, illegal possession of wildlife trophies, dealing/ trafficking in wildlife etc. No case file could be found for ivory or rhino horn trafficking in Mombasa despite frequent news reports of ivory seizures in the Port of Mombasa and allegations that Mombasa is one of the world's most notorious ports for ivory trafficking. In Nairobi's Makadara Court which deals with airport arrests,

suspects were exclusively foreign – mainly nationals of Asian origin. All pleaded guilty but only one defendant received a jail sentence of six months in June 2013. During the period of the study, criminals were consistently given lenient sentences and fines well below the maximum of KES 40,000/= (approx USD\$ 460).

"It is also apparent that poor file and case management is hindering the prosecution of wildlife related crime and that the full might of the existing law is not being brought to bear on offenders. There is a huge financial incentive for non-compliance that has led to a culture of impunity amongst the criminal fraternity and even within the government departments responsible for protecting these national assets.

"If this impunity is not stopped, Kenya may be viewed as a safe haven for local, as well as organized international wildlife traffickers, poachers and dealers," it said.

## TANA RIVER DELTA JOINS RAMSAR SITE LIST

Tana River delta has been added to the list of Ramsar sites in Kenya at a ceremony that brought together conservation enthusiasts, wetlands experts and local community on January 30 in Garsen, Tana River County. It joins the list of other five designated Ramsar sites in Kenya namely Lakes Naivasha, Nakuru, Bogoria, Elementaita and Baringo.

The Tana River delta site was officially declared a Ramsar site, under the Ramsar Convention, in October 2012. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the Convention was signed in 1971) is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the

conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

This global recognition calls for the conservation of the Tana delta wetlands resources for sustainable development. It aims at eliminating progressive encroachment on and loss of wetlands now and in the future. It acknowledges the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands and their economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value.

The designation of the Tana River delta as a Ramsar site will encourage partnerships that focus on watershed conservation efforts. It aims at dealing with off-site development that could threaten the biodiversity and ecosystem services provided by the site consequently increasing the area for wildlife conservation at national level.

It will also lead to increased funding for research, management and tourism. The public awareness of the site will also highlight its importance and aesthetic value, leading to an increase in tourism directly stimulating economic development of the area.

At 163,600 hectares, the delta is designated as an Important Bird Area by Birdlife International (IBA) as it shelters globally threatened birds. About 5000 breeding water birds from 13 species use it as a breeding site. The delta is the second most important estuarine and deltaic ecosystem in Eastern Africa. It comprises a variety of freshwater, floodplain, estuarine and coastal habitats with extensive and diverse mangrove systems.

## TSAVO ELEPHANT SURVEY SEES SHARP DROP IN NUMBERS



Tsavo elephant population is at its lowest level in more than a decade.

A group of volunteers flying over Kenya's Tsavo National Park counting elephants has found in preliminary results that

numbers are down from 12,500 three years ago, to about 11,000. The count is not done regularly enough to be definitive but it does appear to be the smallest recorded population since 2002. The volunteers used their own planes to help quantify just how many elephants are in the wildlife conservation area. By some estimates more than 80 elephants die every day across Africa simply for their tusks, but that is not the only challenge the animals face. "We've seen opening up of natural vegetation, we've seen development of infrastructure such as houses, roads, market places and so on," said Charles Musyoki, head of species research at the Kenya Wildlife Service. "And that had the effect of reducing the space that is available for elephants and other animals to disperse to," Musyoki said.



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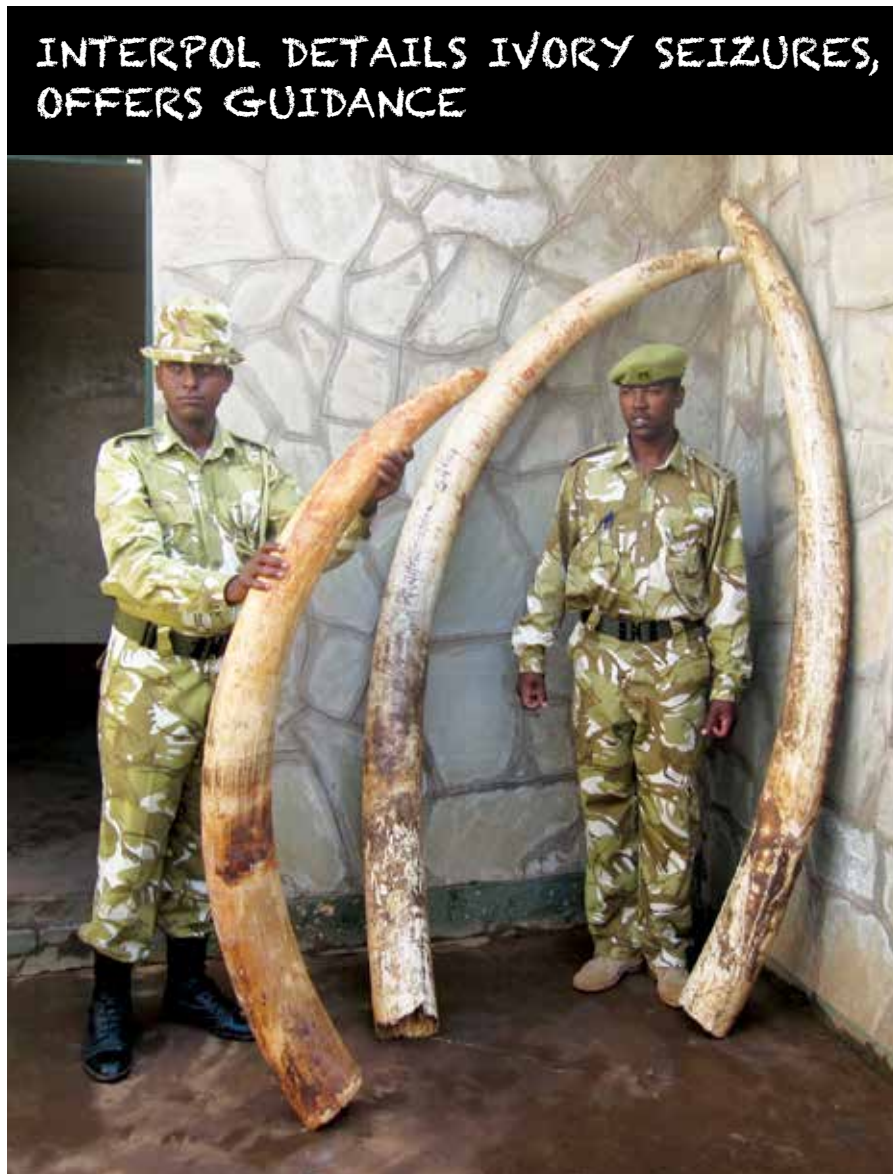
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A February 2014 report by the International Police organisation Interpol says that increased seizures of ivory indicate increased poaching, and sets out a number of recommendations to crack down on the illegal trade.

“Eighteen large-scale seizures (over 500 kilograms) accounted for 41.6 tonnes of illicit ivory in 2013. These seizures represent increases over previous years, mirroring heightened rates of elephant poaching throughout Africa. A significant portion of ivory reaching international markets, especially in Asia, is derived from elephant populations in Tanzania. Moreover, large-scale ivory shipments typically indicate the participation of organised crime, with trafficking syndicates operating in multiple countries simultaneously. These crime



syndicates source ivory from several hundred elephants for each shipment, and they bear the primary responsibility for the drastic decline of African elephant populations. As such, INTERPOL focused on enhancing law enforcement responses to elephant poaching and large-scale ivory trafficking in East Africa in order to identify

methods to assist national and multinational responses the report says.

The majority of large-scale ivory seizures have occurred in maritime ports. The ivory is hidden in shipping containers, and it is usually concealed by other lawful goods. By these methods East African ivory originating primarily from Tanzania has been transported directly to Asian maritime transit hubs, as well as through Uganda and Kenya to Asian hubs and consuming nations, with fewer known shipments to the Middle East. Such large-scale ivory shipments provide considerable opportunities to law enforcement agencies since maritime transport hubs represent logistics bottlenecks where ivory can be detected.

**Interpol’s key recommendations are:**

1. East African elephant range countries, and countries through which ivory transits, should create National Environment Security Task Forces (NESTs) – multi-agency cooperatives formed from police, customs, environmental agencies, other specialised agencies, prosecutors, and where appropriate non-governmental organisations, and inter- governmental partners.
2. East African elephant range countries are encouraged to use the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytical Toolkit to assess their effectiveness in addressing wildlife crimes.
3. East African elephant range countries should create (where this has not already occurred) intelligence analysis and investigation units dedicated to tackling wildlife crime.
4. East African elephant range countries should request INTERPOL Investigative Support Teams to provide assistance in evidence collection and analysis pertaining to elephant poaching and ivory seizures. East African elephant range countries should examine methods to impose multiple count indictments for ivory trafficking offenses, including other serious crime types such as the murder of government officials such as police and wildlife rangers, or the commission of financial crimes including fraud, tax evasion, and money laundering.



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**KENYAN GOVERNMENT SETS UP SECURITY TASK FORCE ON WILDLIFE SECURITY**

The Kenyan government has put together a Task Force to study wildlife security and management after the recent surge in poaching ivory and rhino horn trafficking. In addition, the Task Force is also required to study the threats to wildlife habitat from encroachment, illegal grazing, overdevelopment in protected areas, etc.

The task force, which includes EAWLS head of Development Nigel Hunter, has a broad mandate to look at security, security services, intelligence and the strategy of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) as it relates to private and public conservancies, dispersal and migration areas, etc.

The 16-member Task Force is mandated to hold public meetings and to seek submissions on all matters relating to the safety of wildlife its terms of reference and to submit a report with recommendations by end of April 2014.

**ROYAL AFRICAN FOUNDATION WILDLIFE CONSERVATION RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS**

Up to 2007, the Society used to support research grants to students to gather scientific information for advocacy. If Society is to continue being a leader in proactive advocacy, capacity to generate factual information is important. The Society has therefore established a partnership with the Royal African Foundation to support student research at Masters level in the following areas; social and environmental effects of large scale water development, oil and gas, energy, tourism, infrastructure and irrigation projects. This partnership will encourage good environmental students to get attracted to working in the conservation arena. More information about this opportunity can be obtained from:

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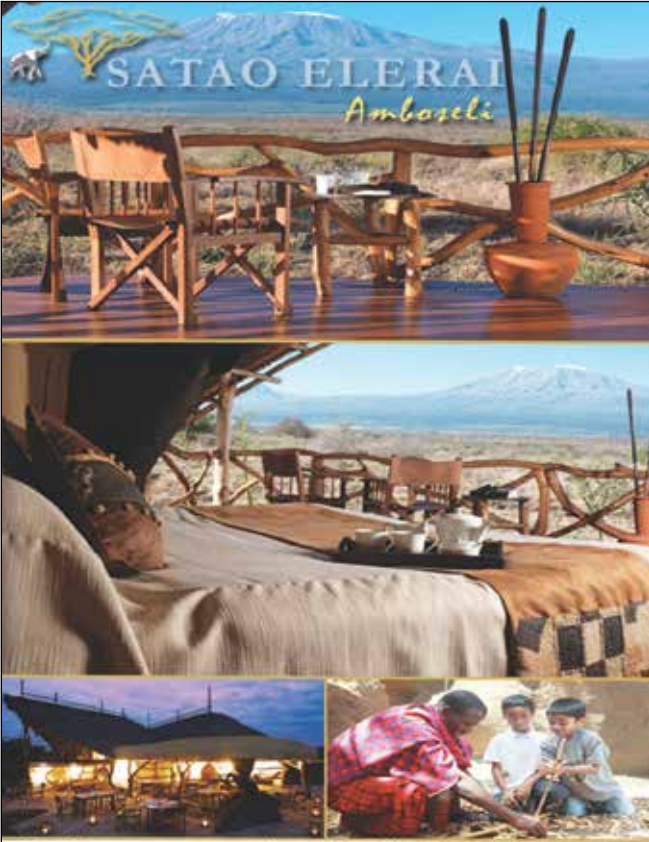
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## UGANDA RELEASES CONFISCATED IVORY FOR SALE

On the day when the Ugandan media was focussed on the signing of a controversial anti-gay bill into law by Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni, 2.9 tonnes of ivory were released by the country for sale in China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Ugandan Revenue Authority (URA) had seized the ivory being smuggled through Uganda from the DR Congo on 17 October last year. Reportedly consisting of 832 individual pieces, the haul is gruesome evidence of the deaths of many hundreds of elephants and has a market value of several million dollars. According to the Ugandan authorities the culprits behind it are

Ugandan, Congolese and Kenyan, reflecting the international nature of wildlife crimes in Africa today. However following the confiscation of the material, the traffickers sought a court order to compel the URA to release the ivory, which they claimed had been imported legally.

Despite the traffickers never putting an appearance in court, and there being no documentation confirming the ivory entering Uganda, high court judge Justice Musalu Musene ruled in their favour and ordered the ivory to be released for onward export. Maria Mutagamba, Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, has expressed her shock at this ruling:

"We are very dismayed by the said judgment and the likely implications it has for Uganda as a contracting party to CITES Convention [and] ... most importantly the damage this has on tourism development and wildlife conservation in Uganda. A team of lawyers of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and URA have already filed a notice of appeal to challenge the judgement. We shall decisively pursue the criminal prosecution of suspects (owners of the confiscated ivory) until they are brought to book. Security agencies continue to pursue these suspects who are at large."

# My Wild Life

**A**frica has unique wildlife that occurs in varied habitats from snow-capped peaks to sandy white beaches. Africa also has one of the highest human population growth rates, which threatens vital animal and plant habitats. Photographic technology is also changing at an exponential rate and many budding photographers seem obsessed with shots of charismatic mega-fauna and seem to forget about the thousands of different and spectacular animals that live within or just outside where we stay.

SWARA has created this special section on "My Wild Life" to showcase all those forgotten animals that play significant roles in maintaining ecological

harmony. From bees that pollinate flowers to geckos that eat harmful mosquitoes, from sunbirds that enthrall us, to chameleons and frogs that fascinate us. This is YOUR opportunity to show case what is "Your Wild Life".

In each issue we will select a winner who will receive a prize. Even if you do not have a big garden or own a concrete patio, you will be surprised at what shelters in the nooks and crannies. If you live in town one of the best ways to help wildlife is to garden for wildlife.

This does not mean giving up on your herbaceous borders and letting the nettles grow, but just adapting what you may already be doing. Gardens are

extremely important for wildlife, not only can they provide food and shelter for a huge range of plants and animals, but they can form a natural "bridge" between built up and open areas which allow wildlife to move between them relatively easily. Gardens can also provide particular habitats that may be missing in your local area such as ponds and suitable foraging or nesting sites.

**Send your images to: [bishopokello07@gmail.com](mailto:bishopokello07@gmail.com) and don't forget to insert a three-four sentence caption on why you took that picture and what story it tells.**

**My garden in Diani is visited regularly by a band of Angolan black and white colobus. Every so often we get a new member, as here with this adorable baby in the arms of mum.**

PHOTO BY: DAN STILES





This greater bushbaby and sun squirrel are regular visitors to the Shimba Hills Lodge and will jump for an opportunity for a piece of fruit left lying on the table.

PHOTOS BY: STEVE TROTT



During the dry season in South Coast water is scarce. This Sykes monkey is sucking water, even though it's a bit salty, from the tap in my yard.

PHOTO BY: DAN STILES



Nairobi can be amazing for raptors. This African Yellow-billed Kite frequently perches on a power pole and swoops down onto the garden for a scarp or two.

PHOTO BY: MUNIR VIRANI



The tranquility of my garden in Diani is occasionally disturbed by the raucous calls of Silvery-cheeked hornbills. The silver cheek is well seen here.

PHOTO BY: DAN STILES

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# LONDON CONFERENCE

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**MARKS TURNING POINT IN  
WILDLIFE PROTECTION**



FELIX PATTON



is a rhino ecologist, who writes and broadcasts about the species from Africa and Europe. He has an MSc in Conservation Biology and a PhD based on research into individual rhino identification

and social behaviour. He is a frequent contributor to SWARA.

February 13th, 2014 will be remembered as a day that the world made great strides towards protecting iconic endangered species including elephants, rhinos, tigers and pangolins. On this day, over 40 countries signed a declaration which recognised “the significant scale and detrimental economic, social and environmental consequences of the illegal trade in wildlife” and made a set of political commitments to bring the trade to an end.

East Africa was well represented with Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda all supporting the Declaration.

The ‘London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade’ came about after a group of African presidents – in particular the President of Gabon, Ali Bongo Ondimba - approached Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, with a plea to help them with the escalating poaching crisis that they were facing. With the support of his son Prince William, the Prince mustered support for many initiatives that preceded the Heads of States conference, hosted by the United Kingdom government, which they both attended along with Prince Harry.

So what changes should the Conference Declaration bring about?

Perhaps the most significant development is the recognition that the illegal wildlife trade is a “serious crime” which has far reaching consequences. As the Declaration puts it: “the illegal wildlife trade robs states and communities of their natural capital and cultural heritage, with serious economic and social consequences. It undermines the livelihoods of natural resource dependent communities. It damages the health of the ecosystems they depend



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM

Top: President Ian Khama of Botswana at the London Conference on The Illegal Wildlife Trade, 13 February 2014.

Left page: The Prince of Wales, The Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry work together to highlight Illegal Wildlife Trade.

on, undermining sustainable economic development. The criminal activity and corruption associated with trafficking restricts the potential for sustainable investment and development which is needed in new economic activities and enterprises.”

The illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products has become the fourth most important criminal activity after drugs, arms and human trafficking valued at up to US\$20 billion a year.

It has latterly been embraced by transnational criminal networks and terrorist organisations. As such, it can only be effectively tackled with the involvement of ministries and agencies beyond the wildlife conservation sector and not just on a national basis but also transnationally.

Governments will have to be fully engaged for this very significant change to succeed but it is not really that difficult to get started as there



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM

Foreign Secretary William Hague answers questions from the media at the end of the London Conference on The Illegal Wildlife Trade, 13 February 2014.

Development Bank; the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and regional Wildlife Enforcement Networks.

So, the infrastructure largely exists but what actions now need to be put in place to prevent illegal trade in wildlife? There is generally a sense of realism within the conservation community that total eradication of illegal trade is an unrealistic objective and that a real achievement would be to firstly stop the current escalation of the killings – currently at some 22,000 elephants and over 1,000 rhinos per year – and then limit the killings to the lowest level possible.

There are two sides to the killings/ trade – on one hand there is the supply of the products while on the other there is the demand for the products. This creates a continuum from the poacher to the end user. At each end there are large numbers of people involved (and therefore more difficult to tackle in the short term) than in the middle where the number of wholesalers and traders, often referred to as “kingpins” are few (where strong action can lead to immediately effective results).

Many countries have regarded illegal wildlife trade – from poaching to using

are already many bodies that support governments in the other fields of international crime, in particular: the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); the World Customs Organization; the World Bank; and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (which together

comprise the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime); the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the UN Convention against Corruption; the United Nations Environment Programme; the United Nations Development Programme; the African Development Bank; the Asian



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM

The Prince of Wales, The Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry with delegates in session at the London Conference.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM



**Top:** HRH The Duke of Cambridge with actor Jackie Chan at the reception for the London Conference.  
**Below:** Prince Harry listens to speeches by foreign leaders at the Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference at Lancaster House on February 13, 2014 in London, England.

– as a minor crime and either have weak penalties or judiciary that give minimal penalties for those prosecuted. This is already changing with South Africa announcing some recent heavy sentences to guilty persons and Kenya adopting a new wildlife bill that enables the judiciary to give significant fines

and prison sentences to perpetrators. The Declaration calls on other countries to follow suit and adopt stringent deterrent sanctions implementing “the UN Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime, and ensure that their domestic offences involving wildlife trafficking fall within the definition of “serious crime” in Article 2 of the Convention”.

Prior to prosecution, there has to be evidence. Many of the early prosecutions of poachers and traders fell down for lack of, or incorrectly collected, evidence. But first there needs to be more law enforcement officers at key sites who should be well equipped and well trained to catch the poachers before, during or after an incident. The ability to link a poacher or a trader to an individual killing is essential

for a successful prosecution and this requires appropriate investigative tools and techniques including intelligence networks, traceability systems like micro-chipping rhino horns, detector dogs, ballistic analysis and the use of existing forensic technology. The newly opened Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) forensic laboratory in Nairobi, for example, offers increasing capacity to obtain evidence against poachers and traders as will wider use of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytical Toolkit.

The Conference acknowledged the role that corruption and bribery was playing in facilitating the illegal trade in wildlife at all levels in the chain and requested a zero tolerance policy. The Declaration urges “all governments to

PHOTO BY: JOHN STILLWELL - WPA POOL/GETTY IMAGES





PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM

HRH The Duke of Cambridge speaking at the London Conference on The Illegal Wildlife Trade at the Natural History Museum, 12 February 2014.

become parties to, and implement, the UN Convention against Corruption, which can be a valuable tool to prevent corruption and foster international cooperation in corruption cases, including extradition, mutual legal assistance and asset recovery”.

If there was no, or at least a much reduced, market for wildlife products the killing would also stop. Key to demand reduction is raising awareness and changing behaviour. The Declaration states that Government

support is important to ensure that demand reduction efforts are implemented on the scale and in the time-frame needed to have a meaningful impact. However it then states that “actions should be scientific and clearly evidence based, building on research into users’ values and behaviour”. The two actions may be in conflict as research results that are approved by the scientific/academic community can often be time consuming. Some short cuts may have to be taken to avoid

lengthy delays in getting evidence that all agree on.

What will clearly be to some a controversial action in the Declaration is the encouragement of Governments “that have stockpiles of illegal products, particularly of high value items such as rhino horn or elephant ivory, to destroy them”. There are conservationists that believe that destroying stockpiles sends the wrong message to the illegal traders in so far as it reduces the (potential legal) supply thereby possibly increasing



the value of remaining stocks with a consequent increase in poaching. It seems illogical to suggest on one hand that demand eradication actions are evidence based and then, on the other, to encourage an action that has no evidence base.

In addition, the clause goes on to “renounce, as part of any Government procurement or related activity, the use of products from species threatened with extinction, except for the purposes of bona fide scientific research, law enforcement, public education and other non-commercial purposes in line with national approaches and legislation”. This seems to stamp out any future requests for a legal trading system without any credible research being available to show evidence that such a system would cause potential harm.

The countries most often implicated in the demand for illegal wildlife products - Vietnam, China and Laos – were represented at the Conference. Much of the resurgence in rhino poaching has been found to be due to the horn being used as a status symbol and gift to business partners and officials. As a counter to such uses, the Declaration calls on the private sector to adopt zero tolerance policies on corporate gifting or accepting of species



Foreign Secretary William Hague meeting President Ian Khama of Botswana at the London Conference on The Illegal Wildlife Trade, 13 February 2014.

threatened with extinction or products made from them. Status is often implied from the perceived value of a good and value may not simply be monetary. The product might have health or other benefits. False claims as to the value of a wildlife product, (such as rhino horn is a cure for cancer), could stimulate

poaching, trafficking or demand so, as the Declaration states it is important to “minimise speculation in endangered wildlife products by opposing the use of misleading, exaggerated or inaccurate information”.

In many wildlife areas, often adjacent to protected parks and reserves, there is no income generating opportunities for the surrounding communities. It is therefore vital for communities in these situations to be able to obtain a sustainable livelihood from the wildlife. If the wildlife disappears due to illegal trade, so does the livelihoods of the communities. Conserving wildlife through shared management responsibilities such as community conservancies, public-private partnerships, sustainable tourism and revenue-sharing agreements is seen in the Declaration as being essential to “increase capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities and eradicate poverty”. Governmental development policies and planning should also take account of measures to address illegal wildlife trade.



Southwater Infant Academy, Horsham present a cardboard elephant to Foreign Secretary William Hague during the London Conference on The Illegal Wildlife Trade, 13 February 2014.



Prince Harry, Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and Prince Charles, Prince of Wales join other delegates for a family photo at the Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference at Lancaster House on February 13, 2014 in London, England.

**So where do we go from here?**

It was recognised that many of the political commitments made in the Declaration would require substantial funding. Donors were urged to “provide resources, support and technical assistance” to add to on-going financing such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The United Nations General Assembly was to be asked to establish a Special Representative to the Secretary General to further the fight against illicit wildlife trafficking. It has been suggested that such an office would be ideal to act as a monitor of the progress being made by individual countries in living up to their commitments and reducing illegal wildlife trade.

Most important will be to base all decisions on good and accurate information – of the markets and dynamics of illegal wildlife trade and the progress in combating it. A

lot more needs to be known - on the links between wildlife crime and other organised crime and corruption, the links to terrorism, the underlying causes and implications of trade, including the effects on regional stability and security, the environment, socio-economic development, and on international relations.

Time is of the essence for many endangered species. ‘Actions speak louder than words’ and it is now essential to see the actions agreed at the London Conference being rapidly implemented so that come early 2015

when there is to be another high-level conference, this time in Botswana, real progress is made in countering the illegal wildlife trade.

The Conference also heard first-hand from the Presidents of Botswana, Chad, Gabon and Tanzania, and the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, who announced the proposal of an Elephant Protection Initiative to secure new funding from private and public sources for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan. ●

The Declaration can be downloaded in full free on the web at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/illegal-wildlife-trade-2014>

The Elephant Protection Initiative can be downloaded free on the web at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/decisive-action-agreed-on-illegal-wildlife-trade>

# A RETIRED TUG TO THE RESCUE OF A KENYAN MARINE PARK

BY SANDER DEN HARING



is a conservation biologist who has resided in Kenya since 2004 and since then has spearheaded various marine conservation projects involving local school children, recreational resource users (scuba divers and snorkelers) and residents along the Kenyan coastline. He has worked in East Africa, Latin America, The Caribbean, The Middle East and Europe. His most recent undertaking has been a PhD project in the Mombasa Marine Park and Reserve, Kenya, from James Cook University, Australia. Currently Sander is a diving consultant for Buccaneer Diving, an underwater photographer and the project coordinator for the Fish Eagle Project.

She was a tugboat and oil industry and diving support vessel. She worked in the North Sea, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mauritius, South Africa, Eritrea, UAE, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

Now 48 years old, it is time for the MPV Fish Eagle to retire. But she will still be in service - creating an artificial reef in the Mombasa Marine Park and Reserve, helping to create an environment in which coral and their cousins can shelter.

When a vessel reaches the age and/or state of retirement there is generally one of two possible options: decommission of the vessel for scrap metal (the most

commonly used method and the most profitable for the owner), or use the vessel to create an artificial reef.

The latter option has gained global momentum in the past two decades, especially for decommissioned navy vessels. Artificial reefs have been created out of an abundance of materials - ships, army tanks, subway cars, used car tyres, specially produced concrete structures, cars, airplanes, lighthouse ships, oil rigs, and sand bags.

They have been used for a variety of purposes - habitat enhancement for sport divers, fishermen and reefs, museums, memorial sites that offer a 'green' alternative to burial, enhancement of surfing areas, coastal protection, port barriers and political



PHOTO BY: COMARCO LTD

MPV Fish Eagle completing a fuel delivery to Kismayo in 1985. Insert: The MPV Fish Eagle at the Comarco base in 2013.

PHOTO BY: D. DEN HARING



The engine room of the MPV Fish Eagle undergoing cleaning and preparation. Note how holes have been cut in the ceiling to allow the twin 16 cylinder engines to be removed via crane. These openings also act as comfortable entry points for penetrating wreck divers.

statements. Currently the largest artificial reef is the USS Oriskany with a length of 276m and a width of 39m.

The MPV Fish Eagle is a multi purpose vessel that was originally built in Germany by J.G. Hitzler Schiffswerft (Hitzler shipyard) in 1966. The MPV Fish Eagle is 52.85m long and 11m wide. She has four different deck levels: the bridge, the officer's deck, the crew deck and the engine room/bilge level. Her early days were spent as an oil field supply vessel in the North Sea. In the early 1980s a British company called Eagle Tugs Ltd. bought her and changed her name from the original Fangturm to Fish Eagle. The company positioned her in Mombasa to assist with the rising oil industry in Madagascar. MPV Fish Eagle was purchased by Kenya Marine Contractors Ltd. in 1997 and has been based in Mombasa ever since. MPV Fish Eagle performed her multi-faceted jobs with distinction; however, the time has come to retire her.

Intentionally creating artificial reefs in Kenya started in 2002 with the sinking of two decommissioned vessels. The MV Alpha Fungua, a 44.5m fishing vessel, was sunk in February 2002 off the coast of Diani by Diving the Crab and Forest Dream Diving. The MV Dania was a 77m cattle carrier that was sunk in October 2002 by Buccaneer Diving off the coast of Mombasa. Diving the Crab then sunk a 5-seater Piper Apache 160 in 2004 whilst Buccaneer Diving teamed up with CORDIO-East Africa, Lafarge Ecosystems and KWS to create artificial reef modules (ARM's) that were deployed in the lagoon of the Mombasa Marine Park in 2007. These concrete structures were cast from a special type of cement produced by Lafarge that has a similar pH to seawater thereby preventing the leaching of any cement toxins into the surrounding environment. The MPV Fish Eagle will become the latest intentional artificial reef as Kenya

Marine Contractors Ltd. has chosen a similar fate for the decommissioned vessel in a bid to return something to the Mombasa area.

This conservation initiative aims to create a new reef in the Mombasa Marine by creating shelter and habitat for fish, and by providing substrate for coral and other invertebrates to attach on to. The location will be on a flat sandy area about 250m off of the main fringing reef within the park off the Shanzu coast. This barren, sandy area currently offers no shelter or substrate and therefore attracts little wildlife. Once the ship is sunk, it will not only attract huge schools of fish and other diverse marine life, as have the MV Dania and MV Alpha Fungua, but also recreational scuba divers. The local diving industry will be given a great boost having a dive site such as this to offer, and the wreck's popularity has already been guaranteed by local support and interest.



**Top left:** The 8 ton crane being prepared for removal. Interestingly, this is the same crane that was on the MV Dania prior to being sunk as an artificial reef in 2002.

**Top right:** The deck of the MPV Fish Eagle in November 2013. Most of the debris seen in this photo was removed from the engine room and bilge level of the MPV Fish Eagle.

**Bottom:** The bridge of the MPV Fish Eagle in December 2013. The bridge was completely cleaned of all wall panels, electrical cabling, insulation materials, windows and wood.

Kenya Marine Contractors Ltd. has generously donated not only the vessel, but also the cleaning and preparation of the vessel. Before a vessel can be sunk as an artificial reef, it must be cleaned of all materials toxic to the environment. This includes all lubricants, oil, diesel and other hydrocarbons, and refrigeration coolants. More than 40,000 litres of contaminated liquids have been removed from the vessel. These fluids have been transported to a facility that disposes of them in

an environmentally friendly manner. Furthermore, all machinery, including the engines, electrical material and wiring, wall paneling and insulation material has been removed. The length of the removed electrical wires was estimated to be many kilometers.

After the vessel was cleaned, it was prepared for diver safety: doorways were widened, windows were removed, access holes were cut throughout the vessel and any areas deemed unsafe for diver visits were permanently sealed.

The cleaning and preparation of the vessel was completed in February and an environmental inspection was conducted that deemed the vessel safe and ready to be sunk. The Kenya Wildlife Service invited representatives of National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), Kenya Navy and KMA to assist with the environmental inspection. The vessel is scheduled to be sunk late March 2014.

There are two ways to sink a vessel intentionally. One method uses explosives to create holes in the hull to allow water to begin flooding the various bilge compartments of the vessel. These controlled explosions would usually be paired with more explosives to create holes throughout

the vessel, allowing water to not only flood the vessel but also allowing air to escape. The placing of these explosives, and the amount of explosives, require very detailed methods to prevent the vessel from being reduced to a series of metal piles, or to stop the vessel from turning turtle, which could happen if the water flooding, and the air escaping the vessel do not occur in unison. A more controlled method to sink a vessel intentionally is to flood the vessel by either removing the seacocks of the vessel, or manually pumping water into the vessel. This is the method that will be used to bring the Fish Eagle into the depths. Holes have been strategically cut throughout the length of the vessel to allow the water flooding in to run evenly along the length and width axes of the ship. This will enable her to sink evenly and prevent her from turning over as water billows into her hold.

On the morning of the sinking it is expected that MPV Fish Eagle will be towed out of the Kenya Marine Contractors Ltd. base at 0600 hrs. She will arrive at her final destination by about 0800 hrs and it is expected to take 1-2 hours to maneuver her into the correct position for sinking. A bow anchor will be dropped followed by a stern anchor to maintain this position and after the final checks have been conducted, the seacocks will be opened to allow the water to enter.



PHOTOS BY: S.D. DEN HARING

**Top:** The Kenya Wildlife Service preparing moorings which will be attached to the vessel. These moorings will be used to identify the site of the MPV Fish Eagle by dive operators enabling them to send divers to dive the artificial reef.

**Below:** Members of the inspection team during the inspection of the MPV Fish Eagle.

Approximately 1.5 hours later she will arrive at her final resting place at a depth of 28m.

To raise awareness of this endeavor various events are planned to introduce residents and visiting tourists to this new dive site. The local dive centres operating within the Mombasa Marine Park and Reserve have all embraced this initiative and have already generated enthusiasm with their current and

future diving clientele. The KWS is also actively supporting this project and will work with the dive centers to raise the profile of the upcoming dive site. The entire process--cleaning preparation, towing, sinking, first marine life--of the MPV Fish Eagle project will be captured in a small documentary film.

Furthermore, video cameras will be mounted throughout the vessel to capture the sinking from the vessel's point of view. It is expected that stunning footage of the sinking will be captured. Various locations throughout the vessel have been identified that will be used to create a time-lapse film of those areas. This time-lapse technique has already captured how those areas have been cleaned and prepared and soon they will include the transformation of life underwater on those areas. The MPV Fish Eagle is expected to become a prime dive destination of the Kenyan Coast.

For more information on the MPV Fish Eagle please contact any dive center in the Mombasa Marine Park and Reserve, or the Project Coordinator at: [info@divefisheagle.com](mailto:info@divefisheagle.com). Alternatively please visit: [www.divefisheagle.com](http://www.divefisheagle.com).



# RE-WILDING

## A NEW CONSERVATION PARADIGM

**FELIX PATTON**

is a rhino ecologist, who writes and broadcasts about the species from Africa and Europe. He has an MSc in Conservation Biology and a PhD based on research into individual rhino identification and social behaviour. He is a frequent contributor to SWARA.

New terminology is gradually entering the vocabulary of the modern conservationist. At the top of the list is RE-WILDING. But, as with many other conservation terms, it is open to the widest of definitions to suit the individuals needs. In essence, rewilding is the restoration and protection of big wilderness areas together with wide ranging, large animals – particularly carnivores.

So where did rewilding come from?

A 1998 paper in the journal *Wild Earth* by Soule and Noss describes how conservationists realised that protecting species in relatively small, isolated areas, (effectively islands), could result in demographic and genetic accidents, environmental fluctuations and catastrophe. The answer was to also have bigness and connectivity. The authors, concerned principally with North America, said three essential features were needed to define rewilding – strictly protected core reserves, that were connected and had carnivores. Carnivores are essential in order to control the population of herbivores and small predators with the authors using the example of the havoc that had been caused by deer that had become out of control in the absence of cougars and wolves. It was also difficult to call a wilderness area truly “wild” where top carnivores such as cougars



PHOTO BY: RENNETT STOWE



PHOTO BY: SENEY NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



PHOTO BY: LITSHEARS



PHOTO BY: RYAN E POPLIN

From Top Left clockwise: Grizzly bear, Gray wolf, American Black bear and Cougar

and wolves or bears were no longer present. Michael Soule established the Wildlands Project which has since become the Wildlands Network with the vision of creating four Wildways, (large corridors for wildlife) spanning North America’s coasts: The Eastern, Western, Pacific and Boreal Wildways. The Wildways are constructed by protecting core areas connected to one another by corridors or linkages. These are essentially mosaics of connected public and private lands that provide habitat and safe passageways for wildlife to travel freely from place to place.

Another North American rewilding project proposes replacing the large carnivores and herbivores that disappeared from North America 13,000 years ago. Under the plan, called Pleistocene “re-wilding,” close cousins and counterparts of the lost beasts, obtained mostly from Africa, would be released into large, protected tracts of land and allowed to roam freely. Ideally, such actions would not only give back to parts of North America an approximation of their long-ago megafauna diversity, they would also help save animals such as the African cheetah from extinction. Pleistocene re-wilding is also justified on economic



PHOTO BY: XANIBOX.BLOGSPOT.COM

From Top Left clockwise: Anatolian leopard, Eurasian wolf and European lynx.



PHOTO BY: QUARTL

grounds, with "ecological history parks" in economically depressed regions of the Great Plains, creating management and tourism jobs for people living in the surrounding towns. The argument goes that as it was mostly human disturbance that led to species becoming extinct, it is right for humans to replace them as best as is currently possible.

In Europe, the Anatolian Leopard Foundation was formed in 2009 to investigate the survival of the Anatolian leopard subspecies in the Taurus Mountains of southern Turkey. However, it is now thought that it is probably extinct so the focus has been broadened under the banner of the Rewilding Foundation. While committed to the fundamental of big wilderness areas, the Foundation states that there are opportunities

other than ‘saving’ far away places with large roaming herbivore herds chased about by big predators. They say that Rewilding is about caring for landscape and biological diversity, no matter what scale is involved.

A simple example of how rewilding can work in practice is their Project: “Conserving large mammals and their habitat as incentive for ecological

sustainable development of a Romanian municipality”. In Romania, the traditional way of life, largely a balanced system of livestock herding, agroforestry and wildlife, is threatened by rural abandonment, with new generations seeking their fortune in the cities. The objective of the project is to provide viable socio-economical incentives for the ecologically sustainable development of Vama Buzaului, a county in Transylvania, Romania. The area is reported to have the potential to develop and integrate, green tourism, small business & industry, alternative living, energy production, agriculture and education. The Romanian Carpathians mountains are a mosaic of meadows, forests and gardens of great biodiversity. The village of Vama Buzaului is situated next to the protected EU Natura 2000 area of Ciucaş, which has sizeable large carnivore populations of bear, wolf and lynx. The presence of the wolf, for example, has considerable revenue earning potential as an attractor for eco-tourists.



PHOTO BY: BOHRINGER FRIEDRICH



PHOTO BY: VALENE AURE



PHOTO BY: BONNIS CIGEL



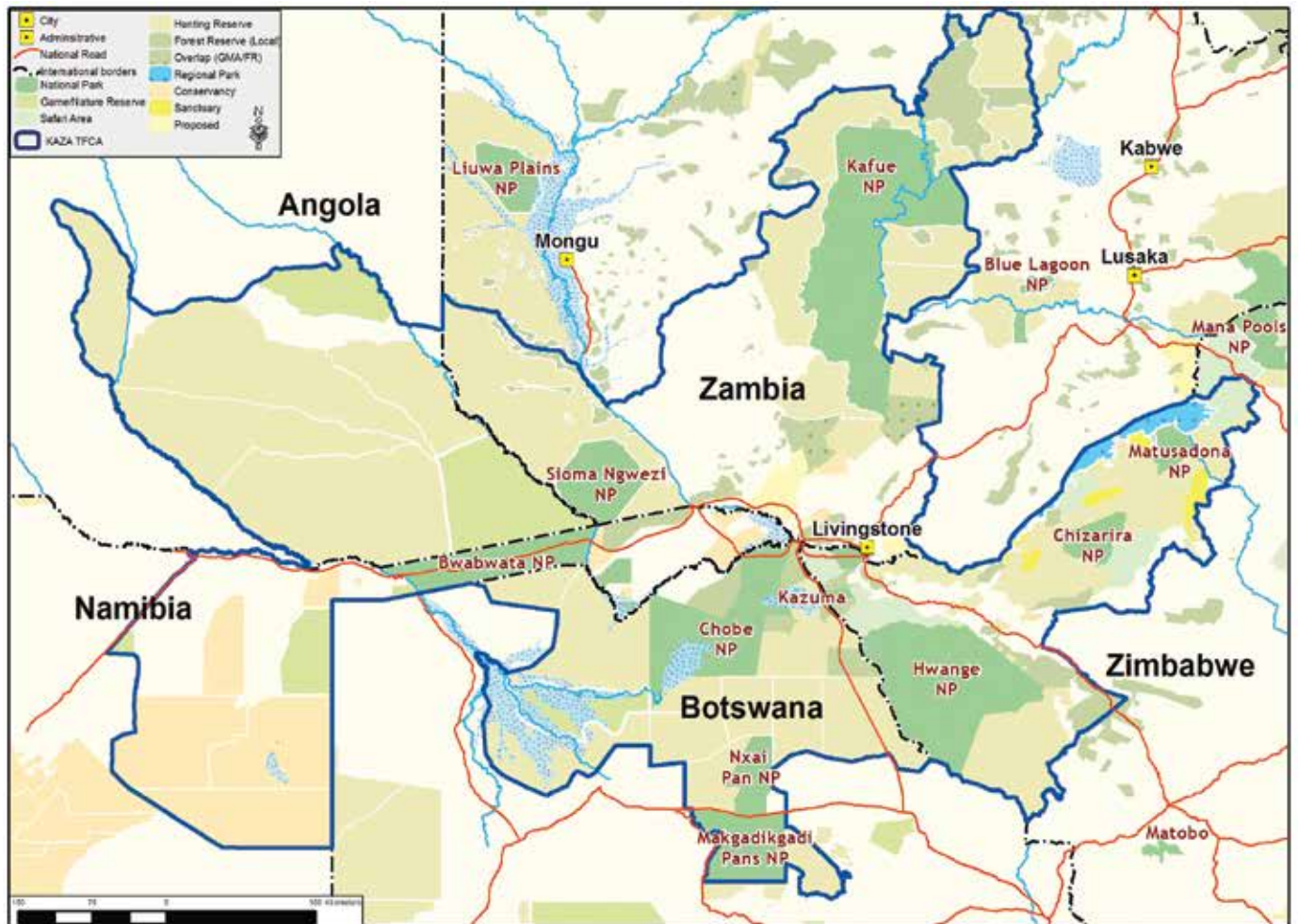
From Top Left clockwise: European bison, European beaver and Chamois.

PHOTO BY: MARCIN BIALEK



A special opportunity for the Vama Buzaului community is the reintroduction of the European (lowland) bison in the region, including the Ciucaș Natura 2000 reserve. Fabian Roth, a village council member and manager of the Zimbri Park (Bison Park) next to the village, has developed a bison herd consisting of stock from Poland, Austria, Italy and France. The herd has experienced the birth of several calves and, if proved to be scientifically appropriate, it is planned for a group of at least 30 animals to be released in the surrounds of Vama Buzaului. The rare bison would be another attraction for eco-tourists.

A more substantial rewilding project is also under development in Romania, in the southern Carpathian Mountains. Three existing protected areas, which together offer a wide variety of ecosystems and cover 225,000 hectares, are the starting point. Within this, a wilderness area of at least 100,000 hectares is planned with missing species such as the European bison and beaver being reintroduced. Deer and chamois would be allowed to flourish in the absence of hunting. Eco-tourism and other business opportunities would be developed within the surrounding communities to bring greater prosperity to the region.



Kavango Zambezi Map

The rewilding area is within the larger South Western Carpathians Wilderness Area project, run by WWF Romania and covering 11 Protected Areas, which offers scope for further expansion over time for the rewilding activities.

There are examples of forms of rewilding in Africa. The developing Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area is due to link 36 national parks, game reserves, community conservancies and game management areas covering parts of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. By creating corridors between conservancies, areas with an over abundance of elephants, as in Botswana, will obtain some relief as dispersal of their populations to areas where historic poaching has devastated their numbers, such as in Zambia and Angola - effectively a form of rewilding – occurs. KAZA will be able to boast

the largest contiguous population of elephants in Africa with around 250,000 individuals and so is sure to become a major tourist destination bringing economic prosperity to the region.

Near the end of 2013 in Kenya, the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of the Environment, Water and Natural Resources Professor Judi Wakhungu was reported in the press as saying that idle land should be used to create space for wildlife. It was suggested that county governments, communities and individual land owners should sell or lease such land to the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to host growing wildlife populations while KWS were directed to intensify translocation of wildlife from areas whose ecological systems were overstretched to free areas to ensure vibrant growth of their numbers. In January, it was announced that 15

Black rhinos were to be moved into a special part of the Sera Community Conservancy in the Samburu East District of Northern Kenya, thereby adding to the rewilding of an area that would have historically supported free roaming black rhinos.

A more controversial form of rewilding being suggested in North America is the introduction of currently available species that are closely related to extinct species. The reasoning goes that as little as 13,000 years ago elephants, lions, cheetahs and camels roamed across North America so why shouldn't their close cousins and counterparts be brought into specially protected areas, particularly in the Great Plains region which is in desperate need for economic rejuvenation. The lack of these key species is reported to have led to a loss of biodiversity with species such as

PHOTO BY: FAYAZ HAWAWALA



PHOTO BY: SHANTHANU BHARDWAY

rats and dandelions among other pests and weeds gradually over-running the landscape. Founder stock would mainly come from African and Asian species currently held in captivity and the resultant populations would act as a buffer against the rapid decline of many species being experienced in Africa and Asia. It would, it is suggested, also offer a refuge from the effects of global climate change that could affect Africa in particular, or economic and political strife all of which could lead to the eventual extinction of the worlds remaining camels, elephants, cheetahs and lions.

Europe offers many opportunities for this type of rewilding as many of its lost species still survive or have close wild or domestic relatives elsewhere in the world. The European bison, Musk ox and Fallow deer have already been re-established. Scientists are suggesting that the Asiatic lion, leopard, spotted hyena, dhole, (Asiatic wild dog), Asiatic elephant and Asiatic wild ass could be established in appropriate current or new protected areas throughout Europe.

Humans have, and continue to be, largely been responsible for the loss of a huge number of species from North America and Europe and are increasingly threatening African and Asian wildlife. Rewilding is a way of reversing this trend.

Perhaps a more controversial approach to rewilding is the use of the latest scientific and technological developments to save all-but-extinct species or re-introduce extinct species to their former habitats. This is termed “De-extinction” and is the subject for the July-September edition of SWARA. ●

PHOTO BY: JULIA LANGFORD



From Top clockwise: Asiatic wild ass, Asiatic lion and Dhole.

# MOUNT KENYA

## PROTECTING THE COUNTRY'S HIGHEST WATER TOWER

**W**hat do the Mau Complex, Mount Elgon, Mount Kenya, the Cherangany Hills, and the Aberdares have in common? They all have forests, and are now classified as 'water towers'. Over the past decade and a half there has been a quantum shift in attitudes and understanding in Kenya about upland forests, their value, and how to protect them. The phrase 'water tower' has entered the vocabulary of not only dedicated conservationists

but also the discourse of government officials. So we now have a Kenya Water Tower Agency, under the Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, charged with the protection of Kenya's highland forests.

A mountain forest plays an irreplaceable role in water catchment, retention and release. The highland itself causes clouds to form, which drop their moisture in the form of rain or mist. A mountain forest with its myriad

plant species absorbs and retains far more water than farmland or any other form of vegetation. Water sinks into the soil under trees at *67 times the rate at which it sinks into the soil under grass* (according to a recent study on flood prevention in the UK). The roots of the trees provide channels down which the water flows, deep into the ground. The soil there becomes a sponge, a reservoir that sucks up water and then releases it slowly into the water table,

### PETER COLERIDGE



Born in Tanzania and a former resident in Kenya, Peter Coleridge is a writer and researcher on community development and environmental issues.

streams and rivers, ensuring a steady flow throughout the year. Destroy the forest and rain water will pour off in flash floods, causing erosion, destroying the topsoil, triggering landslides, and playing havoc with agriculture, communities, and hydropower installations downstream.

This is common knowledge; no rocket science here. But upland forests in Kenya have been under severe and sustained threat for years, losing some 5,000 hectares of tree cover a year. Now finally the penny has dropped that, unless drastic action is taken, what will be lost is not just trees, animals and biodiversity. Collectively highland forests cover about 2% of Kenya's land surface, but their value to the country's environmental stability, economic development and human well-being is, literally, priceless.

In 1989 Rhino Ark was founded to build a 38 kilometre electric game-proof fence around the Salient of the



PHOTO BY: MOUNT KENYA TRUST

**Top:**The Mount Kenya Trust Elephant Corridor team maintain a full spec or 'total' fence.  
**Middle:** The fence, showing chain link being buried to prevent burrowing animals.  
**Below:** Two strand fence built by Mount Kenya Trust allowing access to humans and cattle.



PHOTO BY: MOUNT KENYA TRUST



PHOTO BY: PETER COLERIDGE

Aberdares. Initially the urgency of the task was driven by the need to protect the fast disappearing Black rhino, Bongo, Giant forest hog, and other rare animals, but as the fence crept along the edge of the forest, a better understanding of the social and environmental dynamics of water towers grew - a phrase first used in Kenya in 1999. It was realised that the fence not only stopped humans getting into the forest to poach, make charcoal, fell trees, and farm illegally, but it also stopped animals, especially elephants, from getting out and destroying crops on *shambas* along the forest edge. This meant that farmers next to the forest welcomed the fence, and saw it as entirely in their interests to maintain it. It was a win-win: the forest was preserved and consequently the water tower, the animals were safe, and the farmers were happy. The decision was taken to fence the entire 400 km perimeter of the Aberdares, enclosing 2000 square kilometres. It took 20 years, cost over \$12 million, and was completed in 2009.

It was a momentous decision, truly inspiring in its audacity, commitment and vision. It put down a highly visible marker that a water tower must be preserved at all costs. It ranks as one of Kenya's most significant success stories in conservation.

In 2011, two years after the last post was driven in, Rhino Ark commissioned a major independent report by a team from the University of Nairobi, endorsed by United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), and the Kenya Forests Working Group (KFS). Entitled *The Environmental, Social and Economic Assessment of the Fencing of the Aberdare Conservation Area*, it lists the environmental benefits: a 20.6% increase in forest cover between 2005 and 2010, a 54% decrease in open areas, a measurable increase in numbers of wild animals, and remarkably, a 47% increase in exotic tree plantations outside the fenced area. Farmers are increasingly seeing the importance

PHOTO BY: PETER COLERIDGE



PHOTOS BY: MOUNT KENYA TRUST



PHOTO BY: PETER COLERIDGE



From Top Left clockwise: Charcoal burning, Illegal logging, Carrying charcoal for sale and Shambas showing forest encroachment.

of trees grown on their own land for fuel wood, building materials, and windbreaks.

The study also recorded socio-economic benefits: farmers on the forest edge have seen increased household incomes and land values (as high as 300% in some cases) due to improved farmland security, better crop yields, and safer living conditions. Crop destruction by wildlife has been all but eliminated and children walking to school face fewer risks from animals. Cattle rustling using the forest as an escape route has ceased and disease transmission between wildlife and livestock has greatly reduced.

But the most important finding of the study was the importance of the Aberdares as a water tower. The value of providing domestic water to central Kenya, parts of the Rift Valley and the Tana River valley is estimated at KES

646 million (US\$ 6.9 million) annually. For Nairobi, where almost all the domestic water comes from above and below ground sources in the Aberdares and Mount Kenya, the value given is KES 1.46 billion (US\$ 15.6 million) annually.

Upland forests in Kenya highlight four crucial issues: conservation of wildlife, the human-wildlife conflict, pressure on fertile land from an exploding population, and the long-term economic value of water towers in their own right. A well conceived and managed electric fence addresses all four.

In 1999, while the Aberdares fence was under construction, awareness of forest destruction on Mount Kenya was given a massive jolt by a report based on an aerial survey commissioned by KWS. It identified illegal logging on a huge scale, charcoal production, clearing

forest land for marijuana growing, and fires, as the most destructive practices. It found that unless effective protection measures were put in place, the integrity of the forest, already in great jeopardy, could be decimated within a few decades.

The 1999 aerial survey report produced an immediate and sustained outcry, nationally and internationally. As a result, a country-wide ban was imposed on the commercial exploitation of all forest reserves in Kenya. The Mount Kenya National Reserve was gazetted to provide enhanced conservation status of the entire forest belt on the mountain.

National legislation is one thing, but ultimately, as Colin Church, the former

PHOTOS BY: PETER COLERIDGE



PHOTO BY: MOUNT KENYA TRUST

**Top: Mwanza-mweno women's self-help group tree nursery.**

**Below Left: Mount Kenya Trust patrol with confiscated charcoal cart and Elephant snare.**

**Below Right: Mount Kenya Trust mounted patrol.**

chair of the Rhino Ark Management Committee and a key driving force behind the Aberdares fence, says: 'The community is the key. Forest conservation will only be effective if the community around the forest understands its importance and is committed to it.'

The Mount Kenya Trust was set up in 1999 with an immediate understanding of this crucial point: its aim is to conserve the forest through local community action. The Trust encourages and supports community-run tree nurseries producing indigenous seedlings; it raises awareness in schools about the ecology and value of the forest; it has installed a two-strand electric fence to protect crops from elephants along most of the western National Reserve boundary; and it has three patrols (including one on horseback) on the mountain, whose job is to look for snares, poachers, charcoal

burners, and illegal loggers. These patrols operate jointly with (KWS) who provide armed rangers.

In gathering material for this article, I spoke to many communities around the mountain. Without exception they understood the importance of the forest and were, often passionately, committed to its preservation. They had their own vigilante groups to alert patrols to the presence of poachers or other illegal activity. Statements like: 'We make sure there are no charcoal burners in our area' were common.

Joseph Gitonga, who farms four acres on the forest edge above Nanyuki, told

PHOTOS BY: PETER COLERIDGE



Top Left clockwise: Sykes monkey in the forest, Takazze sunbird and a Young waterbuck.



built in less than 10 years. This comes as good news indeed to Joseph Gitonga and the thousands of farmers like him on the mountain.

The success of the fence in maintaining the integrity of the forest depends on how far it is valued by the communities around the mountain, and on the quality of those who manage it. Christian Lambrechts, the present CEO of Rhino Ark, referring to the Aberdares fence, says: 'The fence is a management tool. It is only as good as its management, in particular of the gates. Has crop destruction on farms around the forest edge stopped? Yes. Has poaching stopped? This depends largely on those who maintain the fence and man the gates.'

Building the fence is a landmark step. Maintaining it in perpetuity, at a cost of \$15,000 per kilometre, depends on a commitment by local communities and by government, which depends in turn on a sustained understanding of the importance of water towers.

Maurice Nyaligu of the Mount Kenya Trust says: 'Local communities must see the fence not as a barrier but as an asset they cannot do without.'

Evidence from the Aberdares suggests that this understanding has taken root at all levels. On Mount Kenya the persistent and determined work done with communities by the Mount Kenya Trust over 15 years has built a consensus which promises well for the future of the forest. On our beleaguered planet this is very good news indeed. ●

me. 'Before the Mount Kenya Trust installed the two strand fence, we used to have to stay up all night to guard our maize crop from elephants. The fence has stopped the elephants, but we still have problems with porcupines, wild pig, baboons, bushbuck and buffalo, which can easily get underneath. We need a big fence to stop all the animals. And we know that it will also protect the forest, and the streams and rivers that flow out of it.'

A comprehensive game-proof electric fence costs Ksh 2,500,000 (\$31,250)

per kilometre, far beyond the reach of local communities. A national water tower needs a national response to protect it. The clear success of the Aberdares fence has persuaded the government and large donors that an electric fence is the best solution to protect Kenya's water towers. In August 2013 Rhino Ark planted the first post of a fence on the southern slopes of Mount Kenya. It will eventually run for 450 kilometres on the forest edge. Because the government and big donors now understand its importance, it should be



# CONAKRY CONNECTION LESSONS NOT LEARNED

Part three by *Dan Stiles*

**DAN STILES**



Began in anthropology with a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley, Dan Stiles has studied natural resource management and wildlife trade from the level of hunter-gatherer up to senior government and international organization official. He has worked in academia, for the United Nations as staff and consultant and for various NGOs such as IUCN, TRAFFIC, Save the Elephants and many more. He has lived in Kenya almost continuously since 1977.

**“I firmly believe the fact that a determined and criminal attempt to supply animals illegally taken from the wild was foiled sends a very clear message to those who may wish to trade illicitly in wildlife that CITES is determined that they will not succeed... I hope...that the gorillas...can ... help graphically illustrate the risks posed to endangered species by illegal trade in wildlife... I believe that it has provided valuable lessons from which everyone involved in CITES must learn.” –**

Willem Wijnstekers, former CITES Secretary-General, July 2003

Wijnstekers made this statement in response to the infamous ‘Taiping Four’ gorilla smuggling case. In January 2002, four infant Western Lowland gorillas were shipped from Nigeria via South Africa to the Taiping Zoo in Malaysia. The Taiping Zoo claimed the gorillas were part of an animal exchange



PHOTO BY: DAN STILES

Ammann decries the fact that these supposed protectors of apes – Drori, Cress and Redmond – will not speak out to rescue the hundreds of great apes that have been illegally imported by China, and more are on the way.

programme with Nigeria’s Ibadan Zoo, and that the gorillas were captive-bred, even though the Ibadan Zoo’s only living gorilla was an elderly female and the last male had been stuffed after dying and was on public display. In reality, a wildlife dealer in Nigeria had trafficked the wild gorillas from Cameroon and reportedly received a combined price of USD 1.6 million for them. The gorillas were transported under valid CITES permits with the C Source Code. After a protracted effort, the four gorillas were returned to Cameroon in December 2007 to take up residence at the Limbe Wildlife Center.

Given the Conakry Connection case described in SWARA (Oct.-Dec. 2013 and Jan.-Mar 2014) in which over 130 wild chimpanzees and 10 gorillas were

shipped from Guinea to China with C Source codes – indicating they were bred in captivity – it would seem the lesson was not learned. Over 10 years after the Taiping Four, gorillas and other great apes are still being illegally trafficked out of Africa with fraudulent CITES C Source Codes. The major difference between the Taiping Four case and the Conakry Connection is that the recipient country, China, and the CITES Secretariat are obstructing repatriation of the trafficked apes back to Africa, insisting that China carried out the imports in accordance with CITES regulations. This is not the case, as Karl Ammann and Swiss NGO Pax Animalis demonstrated in detail in a published report (<http://www.pax-animalis.org/downloads>).

PHOTO BY: KARL AMMANN



A baby chimpanzee whose mother was killed for bushmeat seeks affection from a villager who will sell him into slavery when a buyer can be found.

After more than a year of trying to get the CITES Secretariat, the China CITES office and UN-GRASP (Great Apes Survival Partnership) to take action on those involved in the illegal ape trafficking and to repatriate the apes, the only thing that has been done is a CITES suspension of trade for Guinea – but no action against China.

Karl Ammann is losing patience: ‘All of the organizations that are supposed to be protecting great apes from trafficking – CITES, GRASP, LAGA (Last Great Ape), JGI (Jane Goodall Institute), Ape Alliance – none of them are speaking out! Why? Are they afraid of offending China?’

At the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in February, sponsored by the UK Government and the British royals, Princes Charles,

William and Harry, all of the above-mentioned organizations were present, along with a Chinese delegation. Yet nothing was mentioned concerning the trafficking of the Guinea great apes. The final Declaration lists a number of commitments to stop illegal wildlife trade, but apparently none apply to great apes.

Worse, further investigations of ape trafficking from Guinea and elsewhere in Africa have turned up additional cases involving other networks and more species and countries, including more chimps to China in 2013!

Another major trafficking network involving Guinea was discovered by the seemingly innocuous mention in the CITES Secretariat analysis of Guinea export permits of two Appendix I bonobos (aka pygmy chimpanzee) being

exported from Guinea to Armenia in 2011. The CITES Secretariat did not follow up on it, but Karl Ammann did. Working with Armenian investigative journalist Kristine Aghalaryan, they tracked down one of the bonobos to a private safari park called Jambo Park, located in Dzoragbyur. The large exotic animal complex, open for visitors, is owned by wealthy businessman Artyom Vardanyan. In a local television show guiding viewers through his collection he held a bonobo in his arms the entire time (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dn9LzUA5tas>), boasting that he had paid a ‘large sum’ for the bonobo.

When Aghalaryan interviewed Vardanyan for the local newspaper Hetq, he told her that the bonobo had been imported legally with CITES permits using the now notorious C Source Code. He produced a permit copy showing West Africa Zoo in Conakry, Guinea, as the exporter and Zoo Fauna Art as the importer. After checking, there is no West Africa Zoo registered in Guinea. Zoo Fauna Art is owned by Artur Khachatryan, a wild animal trader who imports from Africa and Asia, often using the UAE as a transit country, then distributes to Russia and elsewhere.

Speaking in the third person, he told the journalist, ‘Mr. Khachatryan is building the biggest zoo in all of Eastern Europe.’ He is currently breeding exotic animals there and he stores imported animals for export later on. Khachatryan boasted that he could get any animal he wanted with little difficulty.

Through interviews and obtaining a list of animals imported to Armenia provided by the State Revenue Committee, Aghalaryan established that at least five Appendix I bonobos and seven chimpanzees were imported in 2011 and 2012. None of these are reported in the CITES Trade Database. Appendix I species cannot be traded commercially.

Since bonobos only live in the wild in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ammann informed the CITES office in Kinshasa about the illegal

exports. The DRC CITES office then contacted the CITES Secretariat about it and a representative at the Secretariat replied that ‘... there are no bonobos in Armenia and third parties should stop sensationalizing this issue’. This statement seems inexplicable given that the Secretariat’s own analysis listed two bonobos in Guinea export permits they had collected themselves in Conakry in 2011 (see SWARA Jan-March 2014).

Likewise, when the Armenia CITES office was contacted, the national head Siranush Muradyan replied, ‘You have incorrect information... CITES Armenia has never confirmed the import to Armenia of the species of primates included in Appendix I’.

Although CITES officials do not seem interested in stopping this trafficking network, or even of acknowledging its existence, INTERPOL has become involved and they have connected Khatchatryan with traffickers of African animals using the UAE and Armenia as transit sites for distribution in Russia and elsewhere. The Armenian police have indicted Khatchatryan with criminal contraband charges.

At the end of January this year three chimpanzees were rescued from the house of an animal trader near Kolkata, India. Papers indicated they came from Nigeria. The Times of India spoke with other wildlife traders who gave them information indicating that ape trafficking from Africa to India was more common than previously thought. Here is another smuggling network to investigate.

Jane Goodall, known for her studies of wild chimpanzees at the Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania, reacted by stating in a communication to TRAFFIC India, ‘Horrible story. There are so many animals stolen from their mothers and sent to far away places. Imagine their fear... These images keep me awake. And they keep me fighting. Thank goodness for the individuals and organisations that are working to rescue chimpanzees and other innocent animals caught up in the cruel trafficking of wildlife.’

Karl Ammann reacted to her statement with, ‘What individuals and organizations are rescuing chimpanzees? No one I know of except Sean (Whyte) and I have lifted a finger to rescue the apes trafficked to China, including Jane Goodall.’ (Sean Whyte of Nature Alert is campaigning to shame CITES and GRASP into taking action.) In fact, it looks like the situation for apes could

**THE GREAT APE SLAVE TRADE FROM AFRICA TO CHINA –**



**From this**  
*Made possible by corrupt CITES officials in Africa.*



**to this**  
*(her mother having been murdered to order)*

**THIS ILLEGAL TRADE WAS CONDONED BY COMPLICIT CITES OFFICIALS IN CHINA**



*photos: Karl Ammann*

**.... and eventually to this life in China, only once a lot of money has been paid to illegal wildlife traders.**

**AND NOW THE CITES SECRETARIAT ARE ALLEGED TO BE ATTEMPTING (UNSUCCESSFULLY) TO COVER UP THE LARGEST EVER ILLEGAL TRADE IN GREAT APES.**  
*Why would the secretariat protect illegal wildlife traders – criminals?*

**CITES ISN'T WORKING – IS IT?**

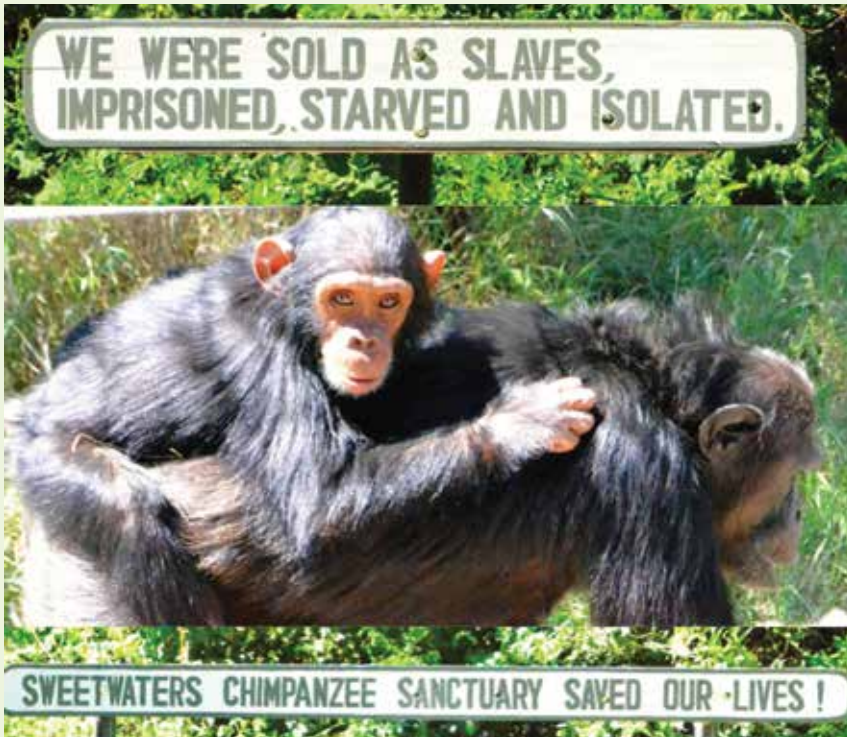
POSTER BY SEAN WHYTE

Sean Whyte of Nature Alert is campaigning to have the illegally trafficked apes repatriated from China to Africa.

get worse. Ammann interviewed Leonard Muamba-Kanda, head of the DRC CITES office, and Cosma Wilungula, director of the DRC national parks and the CITES Scientific Authority, on camera at the CITES conference in Bangkok last year. In the course of the interview the two senior wildlife protection officials showed themselves to be remarkably

familiar with the ape trafficking details and who was involved. Muamba-Kanda even named the trafficker who had smuggled apes out of the DRC to Guinea, and described the route all the way to China. When asked why he didn't arrest the man, both Muamba-Kanda and Wilungula sang in unison that they would lay a trap for him. The ape shipment in question occurred four years ago, and the trap has yet to be sprung.

PHOTO BY: DAN STILES



Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary on OI Pejeta Conservancy is ready to take 30 of the China chimpanzees, if they can be repatriated.

Also during the interview the two Congolese officials revealed that they had been to China to discuss ‘scientific exchanges’ of chimpanzees, bonobos and gorillas with China. Apparently, a prominent zoo in southern China, that also has an amusement park featuring apes, has already arranged to exchange two white tigers for two gorillas from the DRC. Ammann sees this as a cover for shipping off apes to China under the guise of ‘scientific exchange’. Many more of all ape varieties could follow in their footsteps.

As Ammann puts it, ‘Replacing the C scam with the S scam.’ Chimpanzees are worth about US\$ 20,000 each and gorillas considerably more, so it could be quite a lucrative deal for whomever is involved in supplying the apes.

If the scheme goes ahead, it could make the Taiping Four look like child’s play. How about the Guangzhou Four Hundred? CITES, where are you? ●

## LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

What are great ape range States in Africa doing to stop the illegal ape poaching and trafficking? Unfortunately, almost nothing. Local law enforcement – police services, wildlife protection agencies, Customs officers – rarely arrest offenders caught with ape bushmeat, trophies or live specimens. It is more common for agents of those services to take a bribe to allow the offender to go on his/her way, or to confiscate the specimens and consume or resell them. And, as this series has demonstrated, national CITES offices are more likely to facilitate rather than control illegal international trade.

The Last Great Ape organization (LAGA), based in Cameroon, started up a little over a decade ago under the leadership of Ofir Drori, an ex-military Israeli turned wildlife activist. His single-minded goal was to fight corruption and put wildlife traffickers behind bars. When I first met Ofir in a Yaoundé hotel in 2010, he was despairing of being able to continue his fight, as his funding had dried up. His staff were working on a

voluntary basis. His drive and persistence won out in the end, as eventually did he not only find funding for LAGA, but several clones grew up in Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Guinea and Togo. Today, they make up EAGLE (Eco Activism for Governance and Law Enforcement).

EAGLE does not focus on great apes, they have a wide net, but certainly great ape live and product trafficking turn up fairly often in their activity reports and press releases.

Unfortunately, none of the traffickers that smuggle apes and other protected species overseas have been arrested. A well-publicized case of a trafficker that supplies apes to the international traffickers, Ousmane Diallo in Guinea, has ended up with Diallo out of prison even though he was convicted.

The bottom line is that law enforcement in ape range States in Africa is not working, in spite of efforts by outsiders to prod correct action. EAGLE even pays ‘incentive bonuses’ to law enforcement personnel simply to carry out their duties, competing against the traffickers’ bribes, but after an arrest is made, rarely does any offender above the

destitute petty trader level ever go to prison.

The only hope is at the demand end of the commodity chain. Those paying the money to import apes must be driven out of the business. People such as Artur Khachatryan in Armenia and the Golden Land Animal Trade Company in China, the latter boasting they import most of the wild animals into China. And the public have to be made aware that paying money to watch a chimpanzee ride a bicycle dressed as a clown is subsidising ape killing and kidnap in African forests. People should boycott live performances of great apes (and other species caught in the wild) in amusement facilities.

It will not be an easy task, especially with the so-called protectors of apes and other wildlife species more concerned about the next conference presentation or fundraiser event. But if our closest biological relatives are to remain in forests rather than cages we have to try.

# LIFE'S A BEACH

## NICKY PARAZZI



Nicky Parazzi is a founder and present Trustee of the Local Ocean Trust : Watamu Turtle Watch. The Local Ocean Trust (LOT) is

a not for profit organisation. LOT's flagship programme Watamu Turtle Watch includes monitoring, data collection, by-catch release programmes and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre. LOT's multifaceted Community Outreach and Education programmes ensure close collaboration and involvement with local communities and Government agencies including KWS. LOT is supported by AFEW, DWCF / FFI, Tusk Trust and public donations.

A few decades ago conservationists warned of 'species loss'. Now we talk of 'habitat loss', which makes more sense, but perhaps it also indicates how dire the situation is. Sea Turtles are fascinating and one of a few species, completely reliant on specific areas of habitat for their survival. As one of the oldest reptile groups, they have proved to be an excellent marine indicator species. Their habitat uniquely

ranges from the open ocean to coastal waters and the land. Anything that happens in these areas will more than likely affect turtles and eventually humans. The key area to their very existence is the beach and riparian zone directly behind it, as this is where turtles nest.

Female turtles migrate enormous distances using the earth's magnetic field. Most females go back to their natal beach to nest. This is a feat in itself, but to be able to find a specific beach, having travelled hundreds, if not thousands of miles, is incredible. There are many insights as to how they might achieve this. One interesting theory is that they use olfactory clues. Rivers depositing fresh water into the Ocean are thought to attract sea turtles to certain nesting sites. 'Sand smelling' as well, is a behavior where turtles dig their beaks into the sand as they crawl up a nesting beach or while digging their nests - as if to confirm they are in the correct spot. Hatchlings 'sand smell' on their way to the sea after hatching, part of the essential imprinting process

which is believed to enable females to return to safe nesting beaches.

When a turtle lays her eggs, mucous is secreted into the nearly one meter deep egg chamber as an anti-bacterial. Scientists have considered that over thousands of years of nesting, females have left pheromones or chemicals, through mucous and eggshell remnants, to indicate safe nesting beaches. In a nesting season, females may lay up to four clutches of eggs, sometimes more, roughly every two weeks before beginning their migration back to their foraging grounds. These nests are likely to be laid in close proximity to each other. The eggs take around 60 days to hatch. During this time the hatchlings are completely on their own and very vulnerable; however the strategy of multiple nests has proved exceptionally successful for sea turtles, until now.

Indicators from the land are therefore extremely important, if not totally necessary, for turtles to be able to find pristine, safe nesting beaches, key to the future survival of the species. As nesting beaches continue to be destroyed,

Leatherback turtle making it's way to the sea.

PHOTOS BY: LOCAL OCEAN TRUST, WATAMU MARINE PARK



**From Top Left Clockwise: Green turtle hatchlings, Green turtle hatchling, Nesting green turtle and Unusual Leatherback nesting with sun beds being laid out behind.**

remaining safe rookeries increase in value. Nest site fidelity is not definite and nesting females may use other beaches, perhaps increasingly so if their natal nesting beach no longer exists. In January 2014 a Leatherback turtle nested on Watamu beach. This was highly unusual and the first leatherback nest to be documented on the Kenya coast. South Africa similarly recorded an unusual Green turtle nester, and recently similar incidents were also noted in Tanzania and Mozambique.

The near decimation of sea turtles by man is a story to behold. Sea turtles have managed up to now to survive one of the worst attacks ever by any single species on another. Threats to sea turtles were initially just as a

food source and millions have been slaughtered. Then modern High-Tech commercial fisheries started to impact turtle populations as an incidental by-catch. As if this was not enough, nesting beaches, their best strategy for survival, are now being destroyed at an alarming rate. Sea turtles are seriously endangered. The protection of turtle nesting beaches or specifically the protection of turtle eggs, has been recognized as being an indispensable component of successful sea-turtle conservation. Around the world nesting sites, including within Marine Protected Areas, are impacted by coastal development and inshore fisheries. Unfortunately Kenya is no exception. Ungwana Bay was said to be Kenya's

best turtle nesting site, until the advent of high impact, commercial prawn trawling in the 1980s and 90s. This seriously impacted the Bay's benthic environment and it's sea turtle nesting populations. From Malindi to Diani, high-density beach developments, mostly tourism orientated, are springing up with abandon and destroying riparian areas. Environmental Management And Co-Ordination Act (EMCA), conservation and planning laws, are failing. Watamu's Marine Protected Park beach is a well-known turtle nesting site. There are several core rookery areas for namely Green, but also Hawksbill and Olive Ridley turtles. Historically most of the beach is residential and the riparian areas have been respected. As a result most nesting



**Top: Sunbeds at turtle rookery plot 41 watamu marine park.**  
**Below: Turtle nest site amongst beach beds and kiosks.**



absolutely necessary. The percentage of nests that have had to be relocated within the Watamu Marine Park alone, due to human activity, jumped from 6% in 2010 to 17% in 2013.

Forty percent of the world's population now lives within 100km of a coastline. Many have no affinity, understanding or respect for the ocean. Kenya's once pristine beaches and riparian areas, both protected by Kenyan law, are being commandeered by commerce as extended operating areas - including within Marine Protected Areas. A lack of coastal management and the non-implementation of protection laws allacerbate the problem. The pleasure of having one of the world's most amazing animals in our ocean is a privilege and Kenya's beautiful coastline is a benefit for all. We have no right to squander this exceptional natural heritage. For Sea turtles, however a beach is a matter of their existence or not - quite literally Life is a Beach. ●

sites there are still viable, apart from the commercial areas.

Recently, more high impact hotels have appeared within the Watamu Marine Protected Area (MPA), attracting high commercial beach activity and high-density human traffic. Over 1,500 beach operators alone were counted operating within the Watamu MPAs in 2012. The Plot 41 rookery on Watamu's Marine Park beach, the

site of the recent Leatherback nesting, is one such area. Nesting turtles and hatchlings need an unimpeded access to and from pristine riparian area nesting sites, above the high water mark. Noise, lights, structures and barriers, such as sea walls or sun beds, can prevent hatchlings reaching the sea, prevent nesting attempts or cause nests to be laid in an unviable area. The Local Ocean Trust only relocates nests if

# THE STORY OF TAI BUNDI

**JOANNA HEWITT-STUBBS**



is an avid environmentalist & conservationist. She was educated in Kenya and the UK. With family roots in Africa. Since the early 1920's she has

made the Kenya's north coast her home for the last 38 years. She has experienced first hand the consequences of rapid urbanization in the loss of habitat for wildlife. Joanna now lives in Kilifi and is a keen photographer, artist and fitness fanatic.

A bedraggled, silver-grey chick crouched at the foot of a Neem tree one damp morning. I carefully inspect him for injury, suspecting that he is another crow-casualty; he seems to be intact. The air is filled with the raucous squawks of a persistent flock of crows harassing the parents of this little bird – they are Verreaux Eagle Owls and we have observed this family from our home in Bofa, north of Kilifi town, for the past decade.

I carry the chick home, snuggle 'him' in a laundry basket nest and ring Sarah Higgins at 'The Little Owl Sanctuary' in Naivasha. We weigh and measure him, and send her the results together with a photograph.



PHOTOS BY: JOANNA HEWITT-STUBBS



**Top Left: Day 1 not quite 6 inches!**  
**Top Right: Taking care of Tai**  
**Below Left: Tai playing with toy**  
**Below Right: Tai making friends**  
**Bottom: Tai 3 weeks old**

Day-old chicks are reputedly ideal food for baby owls but until we can source these, slivers of chicken, mince with a little fur – but whose? Our cats unknowingly donate a little fluff and I steal some snips of dogs' tail hair, incorporating it with the meat. The little owl wolfs down everything we offer him. He grows at a prodigious rate; quickly settling into a routine of twice-daily meals. The dogs are intrigued and the cats disdainful.

Our little owl casts his first pellet – an amazingly efficient aspect of owl digestion. He scratches furiously at his stubby feathers, scattering snow-flakes of paper-like down as his new plumage appears; gradually his beaky little 'face' assumes better proportions. He takes an active interest in what everybody else

is doing. My nephew Francesco comes to stay and he and the owl become firm friends.

The days grow into weeks and we must think of this little bird's future; his rehabilitation. Perhaps his family will take him in again and give him the vital tuition so critical to his survival? Bofa is becoming rather urban and there is very little dispersal area for large birds of prey. The adult pair has reared several chicks over the years and although on one occasion, we have seen five here together, the resident couple appears to resume sole occupancy of this habitat when the chicks become independent.

My daughter Lara coins the name 'Tai Bundi' for 'our' owl and although it is not the Kiswahili name for this species, it is a loose translation of 'eagle owl' and suits him perfectly.

Tai thrives on a diet of chicken hatchlings however owls in Africa are hounded with taboo and we feel that communities here are likely to be more disposed toward this special creature if



he does a bit of vermin control, or better still reduces the crow population! On occasions we have seen the discarded beak and feet of crows beneath Verreaux eagle owl roosts, which is encouraging. Meanwhile my sister Georgina (Francesco's mum) traps a rat that has been dispatching the contents of her desk and getting away with it. She texts the good news and I swim across Kilifi creek one morning to collect it. She supplies a diver's wet bag into which we put the rat. We have guests for dinner and Tai Bundi is the main attraction! Tai is baffled by a whole animal so my husband Tony is obliged to cut the rodent up and without hesitation Tai consumes every morsel!

Tai has been with us over two months and he is starting to make short flights – actually, circuits, bumps and some crashes on our verandah – not an ideal environment for a young bird with no adult owls to show him how it's done. We remove as many obstacles as we can, including the blades from our ceiling fans, and we drape the furniture with sheets.

He spends his days with us – perched on a shoulder as we walk around the garden, destroying a feather or contemplating the cats ... an insect or plant on the verandah. At night we cage him for his safety in a large airy owl-house with a 'nest' and branches at



**Top: Tai stretching out his wings**  
**Below: Tai growing up in Kilifi**

different levels across the cage to access the perch. First mistake ... he damages his wing on the wire as he flaps up on to his perch and to our horror the following day he is unable to fly. He crashes repeatedly and looks at us pathetically. We consult with Sarah and other experts. Is there a broken bone? The injury looks external and we cross our fingers that it will heal with twice daily applications of 'betadine'. A week or so later, he resumes his efforts to gain his Private Pilot's Licence! (PPL) The wound is still raw and the feathers on the leading edge hang a little awkwardly which is worrying. However, he gradually progresses to longer flights – across the swimming pool under construction and up onto the rooftops. We are like anxious parents; what if he flies off the property? Clearly, this environment is going to be his downfall so we resolve to make plans to take him up to the Sanctuary at Naivasha.

There is a steady retinue of well-wishers to say their good byes and we set off from Kilifi with Tai contained in a 'pet carrier'. He behaves impeccably and utters not one squeak the entire journey! Sarah meets us in Nairobi and takes him on up to Naivasha. A couple of days later, we visit him and already he is growing accustomed to his new surroundings.

Both Sarah and Simon Thomsett notice immediately that Tai's wounded

right wing is slightly out of alignment and subsequent inspection reveals a much more extensive injury. We return to Kilifi and they operate without delay. The joint is starting to calcify and he has broken two metacarpals. The surgery is long and Tai emerges, bandaged in red and a bit bewildered.

Sarah has another rescued Verreaux Eagle Owl – the magnificent Herculina. She is enormous, formidable and it makes us realize how relatively diminutive the males of this species are. The plan is that they will eventually be a captive breeding pair or, better still, be released together back into the wild.

Tai's healing and hurdles continue. He has since sustained a further break and a green-stick fracture in his wing and as Sarah says, may well be calcium-deficient. His chick dinners are now packed with extra calcium. We hear from Sarah that he is on the road to recovery – again making short flights and ready to begin the vital lessons for his future.

Three months spent in Tai Bundi's company was an immense privilege. This experience has endorsed how very vulnerable creatures like this are today; what a challenge it is for adult owls to rear a chick and how restricted suitable habitats are becoming for them. Our resident pair has 'wintered' elsewhere and has just returned to the Bofa area. Perhaps they are nesting again? ●

# CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS WITH THE NEXT GENERATION

**The Kenyatta family consolidated its political power when Uhuru Kenyatta was elected head of state in Kenya's recent presidential campaign. How has conservation changed since founding president and father of Uhuru, Jomo Kenyatta, set his environmental agenda and banned game hunting in 1977? In the second of a two-part story Calvin Cottar, Batian Craig and Teddy Kinjanjui relate their conservation perspectives and explain what is different from their parent's time.**

BY STORM STANLEY



Storm Stanley has recently joined the UN-REDD team as a Programme Officer to coordinate Knowledge Management. Before joining UNEP, Storm drew both PES and REDD+ principles into the conclusions of her recent MSc in Environmental Decision-making, and since then has written numerous articles on REDD+'s dynamic narrative.

## CALVIN COTTAR

a fourth generation white Kenyan, son of Glen Cottar and great grandson of Charlie Cottar. Between them the Cottars have a century of experience in the safari business from game hunting to operating luxurious safari camps. Calvin advocates devolving responsibility for the control of wildlife and distribution of wildlife revenues to local communities, and defends the argument to reintroduce commercial hunting as a conversation tool.

## TEDDY KINJANJUI

is the son of the late Dr Max Kinyanjui, who revolutionised the energy saving 'jiko' in the 1980's. The now ubiquitous jiko was originally introduced to Kenya from India in the 1930's. Teddy continues to expand the family business by innovating 'jiko' designs and 'kuni' burners – with buyers from near and far – from NEMA in Nairobi to New Zealand. Additionally, Teddy exhorts the government to use aerial seeding to accomplish the task of large-scale reforestation of Kenya's denuded primary forests.

## BATIAN CRAIG

son of trail-blazing conservationist Ian Craig, renowned for enhancing rhino protection and evolving community conservation in East Africa. Believing wholeheartedly that wildlife has no future unless local communities participate in its protection, Ian set up the Northern Rangelands Trust, an NGO that facilitates the development of community-led conservation initiatives in Northern Kenya. Batian took to deep-sea sports fishing before gravitating back to the north of Kenya to manage the Ol Pejeta conservancy working in the perilous arena of security.

**How long have you been interested in the natural world? How did you become involved in conservation?**

**CALVIN:** I got interested from day one; it was just our way of life. Four generations of our family have been in the safari business, from big game-hunting to photo tourism and operating safari lodges.

**TEDDY:** As long as I can remember really. I was lucky enough to grow up in Kenya. I was always busy with my father, who involved us in making a compost and planting trees. I think it just happened from growing up in a beautiful country.

**BATIAN:** Lewa Downs was my home and I was born and brought up with and around wildlife. I have seen Lewa go through an entire transition from cattle ranch to conservancy becoming completely transformed by the late 1980's. After doing a course at the Royal Agricultural College in UK, I returned to Kenya and got involved in sports fishing and then joined Ol Pejeta in 2004.

**Has it been a natural progression for you to follow in your parent's footsteps, and become a conservationist?**

**CALVIN:** I grew up guiding in my dad's camps, did a 5 year stint hunting in Tanzania, then joined the KWS in

the early 90's as one of Dr Richard Leakey's team to initiate 6 'district wildlife forums' as part of a first step to get landowners needs into the policy making process, which was clearly missing at the time, (and is still missing to this day). While at KWS I also initiated the Problem Animal Management Unit. Since leaving KWS I returned to operating our camp (Cottars 1920's) in the Mara and working locally to form wildlife conservancies.

**TEDDY:** My mother used to work for Friends of Conservation and we often went to visit her projects in the Mara. Also, while at St Andrew's Turi we had a very good biology teacher who showed us bugs and introduced us to nature. My life gravitated to the outdoors, but it was a natural progression.

**BATIAN:** I never really wanted to step straight into someone else's shoes - especially my father's. Now I'm a consultant with my own company and do wildlife management, training, IT, security - mainly at Ol Pejeta, and also Lewa.

**Can you remember a defining moment in your childhood when your mother/father inspired you?**

**CALVIN:** I feel my Dad, and forebears were wildlife visionaries. Not just hunters; they were explorers and pioneers in the filming safari too, guiding amongst others Martin and



PHOTOS BY: STORM STANLEY

Above: Calvin Cottar discussing conservation issues with rangers at Sand River area of Maasai Mara.  
Below: Calvin Cottar at Olderikesi Conservancy with a herd of elephants.

Osa Johnson, Paul Hoeffler and George Eastman. I am proud of my parents being the very first people to introduce the concept of the permanent tented safari camp purely for tourism – a lodge style that has been copied thousands of times throughout Africa.

**TEDDY:** One day we came home from school to see a favourite tree of ours – an enormous Fig being chopped down, (we lived at Broomhill Estate, Kiambaa). The tree even had a name it was called Elmira. It was just awful to see the tree on its side and all the leaves crushed and branches piled up around it. I cried my eyes out. My parents' day to day activities – made environmental work seem so exciting.

**BATIAN:** I suppose it is the whole rhino side of things: Rhino capture, translocation and research. We set up a black rhinoceros sanctuary on a corner of our property together with Anna Merz, after poachers were decimating rhino populations (1980's). Lewa Conservancy was one of the few places

you could get hands-on experience. Together with Ted Goss, Peter Jenkins, (former wardens of Meru and Tsavo National Park) Dieter Rottcher (specialist wildlife vet), we spent the whole two weeks of our school holidays just finding a rhino (in danger of being poached) and translocating it to Lewa.

### What is a normal working day for you?

**CALVIN:** I put a lot of energy into the human relations side of running conservancies. I spend up to six hours of my day working with the communities – explaining concepts, trying to promote the conservancy model. I work in





Teddy Kinyanjui showing me one of the muhogo tree seedlings (*brachylaena hutchinsii*), he has planted to help with the reforestation of a valuable species particular popular for hardwood carvings.

Olderikesi, Siana (Mara) and to a lesser extent Shompole group ranch, trying to balance the needs of investors (whom I mentor), as well as the communities where the camps and lodges are situated. Running a camp is an exercise in logistics and I end up fixing things a lot too. I also like to spend time with my guests hosting and guiding!

**TEDDY:** The best thing about having this type of job is that each day is different, from running my shop selling energy saving jikos and kuni burners to updating our products on our Face Book page. There is an amazing socio-economic spread in our cosmopolitan society and interesting people pop into the shop every day.

**BATIAN:** When you get up in the morning you never know how the day will unfold. I am involved in management and whether you are sitting in an office in New York or sitting in northern Kenya - this really means people management. Many of the field officers are living away from home; life can be tough for them. Due to the poaching crisis a lot of my time is spent fire fighting – consistent round the clock security of protected areas, liaison with KWS and the police. But realistically the ones on the ground are doing the hard work.

**Land has become a big issue here in Kenya, and we are experiencing a development boom and**

**accelerated consumerism. Inter-related, all these issues present a high cost to the environment. What will it take for local people to understand that the environment and biodiversity are an asset?**

**CALVIN:** The value of wildlife is not readily understood by the average Kenyan. We should localize the ownership of wildlife and make it the primary resource base for land owners, so they really become proactive wildlife producers. It is about the forces of comparative financial return. If we don't position wildlife into this framework, against a background of a rising population which requires more and more from the land, it can only go one way, and that is extinction.

**TEDDY:** Wildlife as an economic asset undeniably includes both consumptive and non-consumptive activities from safaris to hunting, sales of meat and hides, and promotion of live auction sale of species that are in 'conservation management' status. But if the government insists that this is not possible and that landowners can't be trusted, then the government shouldn't blame anyone but themselves for the wildlife cataclysm that is currently underway.

**BATIAN:** Development comes at a price, but there is also more awareness of people's heritage. There is a much larger middle class than ever before and Kenyan society is starting to value the environment in a different way. There is complete ownership and buy-in to wildlife and protected areas that we didn't see a few years ago. As Kenya develops and grows, and there is need to grow, it makes the areas that do have wildlife whether it is conservancies or national parks all the more important. But it is inevitable that we are going to lose areas, as the population grows.

**Obviously the conservation scene has changed quite a lot since your father's time – do you think that this is a change for the better? What are the current conservation priorities?**



PHOTO BY: NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST

Batian Craig with darted Hirola (*Antelope Beatragus*) hunter, ready for translocation to safe area; Hirola are critically endangered current population is estimated at 1,500 animals only.

**CALVIN:** Absolutely not, it is definitely for the worst. The blanket ban on hunting is a preservation directive. And this is fine when you need to get a species back on track, like when the elephants were in trouble in the 1980s. Consider the Maasai Mara - the star of the show, the prime wildlife viewing area of Kenya - and it is a victim of having no proper management plan. Take cattle for instance which is a transitional issue, the Maasai don't want to sell their cattle while they can graze inside the reserve... and like all wealth in the world, 80% of cattle are owned by 20% of the rich guys with political clout. Guess whose cows are in the reserve? So while the local and national government continues to allow grazing, these cattle owners won't reduce their cattle numbers and the wildlife in the Mara ecosystem will continue to lose. The national and county government just needs to bring in strict livestock controls in the reserves and parks, as

there was in my father's day. Also, I would advocate that the new revenue sources (e.g. from increased gate fees) go towards leasing of land for wildlife conservancies in the wildlife dispersal areas where the money currently does not reach. This is a simple way to get the wealth spread out to the poorest and most wildlife affected people; the very people that we conservationists need to encourage not to change to other land uses if wildlife is to survive.

**TEDDY:** For Kenya's forests, things are definitely worse than in my father's day. I think there should be a paradigm shift where the emphasis is on reforestation, rather than deforestation. It would be good to see the government and Kenya Forestry Service get involved more proactively so that we go back to the figures we had 50 years ago - with close to 30% coverage or at least get back to the UN recommended minimum

of 10%. Forestry is such an important sector of a country's economics. My idea would be to implement aerial seeding, in Mongolia -180,000 ha have been reforested in one year through this method. I wish people would value the forests more - trees are too cheap. I have seen a Maasai headman sell a tree for 1,500/= (£10.70) when the charcoal producer will be able to make 15 bags of charcoal from a medium sized tree and sell each bag at 2,000/= (£14.30) in Nairobi. An estimated 800 tonnes of charcoal is consumed every day in Nairobi, which translates to a lot of trees.

**BATIAN:** There have definitely been changes for the better - and not just the community side of things. Over the last two years, there has been wide-scale awareness and ownership by Kenyans of their environment through public forums. Looking at the current poaching crisis I feel that we are going



Batian Craig translocating a Hirola Antelope (*Beatragus hunteri*), to Ishaqbini Hirola Community Conservancy (IHCC).

through seriously exciting times to bring it to an end – we will never stop it completely – but things are changing. I feel that the Chinese public is at last becoming aware of the predicament of rhino. People are starting to realise that the human population is not going to decrease – and they recognize that wildlife and habitats are a finite resource. The government is also taking the environment more seriously, for instance, the new Wildlife Act is elevating the penalties for poaching crimes.

**With a peaceful election process, concluded, would you encourage tourists to visit Kenya and Kenya's protected areas? And if so do you have a favourite national park?**

**CALVIN:** Yes, I encourage tourists to visit Kenya, we ask tourists to prioritize Kenya because the tourist dollar makes all the difference here for our people

and our wildlife! But do your research - choose companies that are leasing land for wildlife conservancies where possible. My favourite place is Cottars 1920's Camp in the Mara, of course. It is based here at Olderikesi Group Ranch on a pristine community conservancy, a beautiful hilly, diverse landscape, different from anywhere else in the Mara, with a lot of privacy. I feel a deep sense of privilege being here.

**TEDDY:** Yes, not only tourists, investors too – especially as we are currently in a 6% growth curve. I think we have set a shining example among the neighbouring countries in the East African community. We have certainly had our challenges and trials and we have come through. My favourite place is the Maasai Mara Ecosystem, I have been there so often since I was a kid visiting my mothers' projects and I worked there for a while too.

**BATIAN:** Of course! I have a new found favourite place on the Tana River, Ishaqbini Conservancy one of the newest members to join the Northern Rangelands Trust, and the Boni Forest, remote areas near the Somali border. Also, lake Turkana, Watamu Marine Park, which has the advantage of being a tourist destination.

**Do you have a message that you would like our newly elected President Uhuru Kenyatta - to hear?**

**CALVIN:** I would advise the government that there is just no way that markets for wildlife products can be stopped by simple prohibition. 99.9% of wildlife that we have lost over the last 40 years has not gone to any other country, it has been killed and consumed right here in front of our noses. The government should resist the pressure from the large tourism industry players who advise that Kenya would lose tourism numbers if we were to allow consumptive utilisation.

**TEDDY:** Kenya's 2030 Vision Statement which "aims to be a nation living in a clean, secure and sustainable environment by 2030", is double vision! I wonder if any one will be around if we continue doing what we have been doing. The government needs to accept the reality of where we are, and do something about it, really think about 15, 20, 30 year plans, involving as many stakeholders as possible to secure forests and biodiversity.

**BATIAN:** From the wildlife side President Uhuru Kenyatta has started incredibly, and there is a lot of awareness about the environment and particularly poaching - now is the time to change things, when it is seen as a global problem and not just a national problem. The environment (and particularly wildlife crimes) is one of the 'Nine Pillars' of the new government's agenda. To see the new bylaws come through so quickly is massively encouraging. ●

# CHARLIE MAYHEW

## FROM AVID ADVENTURER TO ARDENT CONSERVATIONIST

FELIX PATTON



is a rhino ecologist, who writes and broadcasts about the species from Africa and Europe. He has an MSc in Conservation Biology and a PhD based on research into individual rhino identification

and social behaviour. He is a frequent contributor to SWARA.

Charles Mayhew is the Chief Executive of one of the most prominent, UK based, conservation charities Tusk Trust, a name well known throughout East & Southern Africa. An Englishman, Charlie grew up with his two sisters in the heart of Sussex enjoying a traditional country life and a passion for motor racing. His introduction to Africa came through the visits of an uncle who lived in Kenya and South Africa. “The romantic tales of the wide open spaces and big cities sparked my imagination” says Charlie although he had planned to go to University to study engineering in order to follow his love of racing.

The opportunity to make the first of many subsequent visits to the African continent came in 1979. One of his masters at Wellington College, where he was educated, had started an organisation to enable students to take a year off before going from school to university now known as a GAP year. Charlie went to South Africa to be a travelling salesman with a stationery company moving widely from city to city. From there he went on to be a cook for skiers in an Alpine restaurant in Switzerland where he met many young

Australians. Now he had to visit the Antipodes!

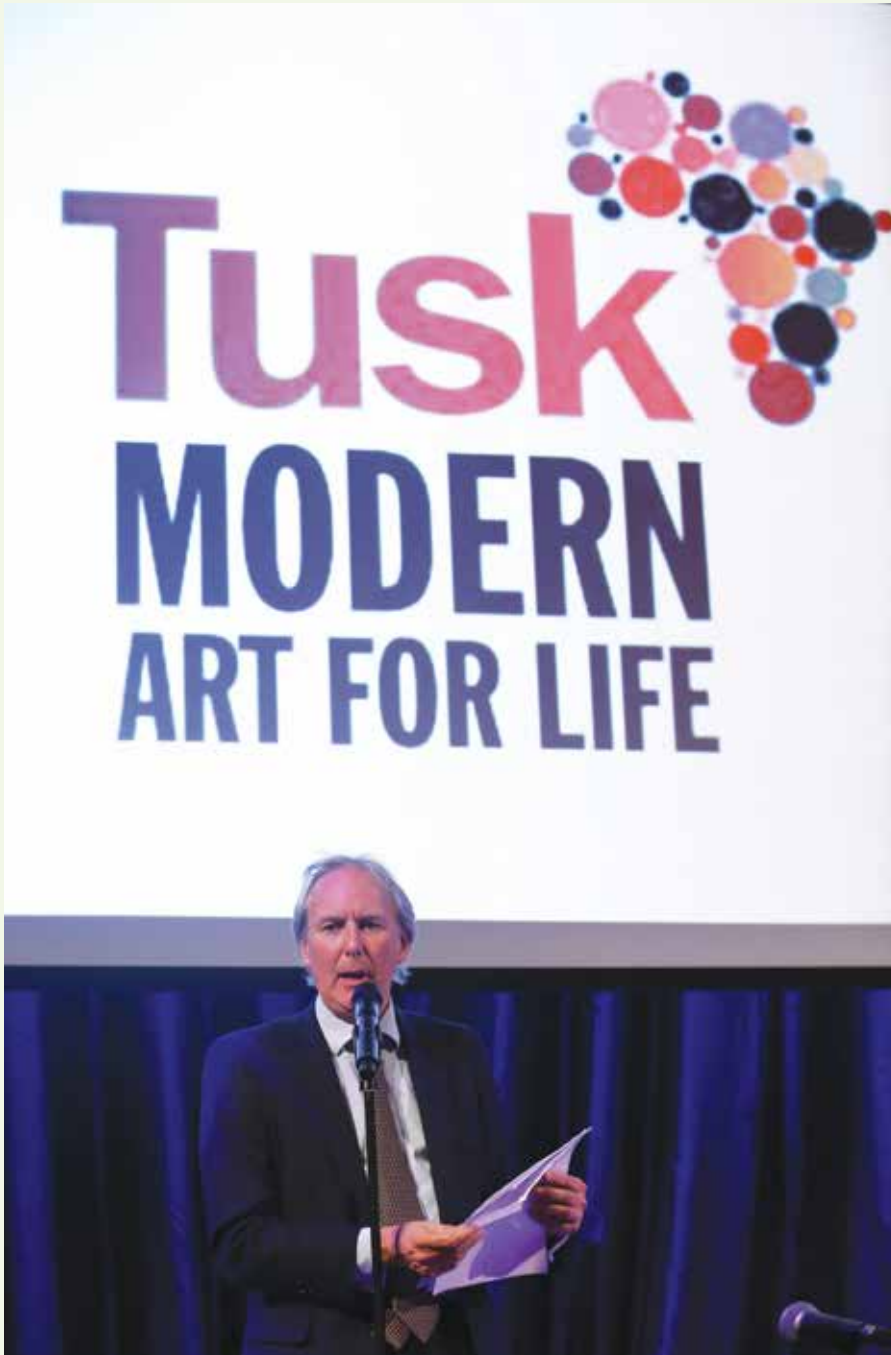
Charlie’s father refused to fund a ticket, so he worked his passage to Australia and New Zealand as a deck hand on a tanker ship. To finance his stay he took small jobs including being a roustabout with a sheep shearing team. By the time he returned to the UK all thoughts of University and engineering had evaporated and he opted to become a marine insurance broker at Lloyds of London with Willis Faber & Dumas whilst moonlighting as a DJ at private parties! London city life gave Charlie a good income but the thought of Africa never faded. Charlie’s professionally honed negotiating skills resulted in Willis Faber agreeing to sponsor him to organise a major trans-Africa expedition for 33 young people drawn from 7 different European countries as part of the United Nations International Year of Youth.

After 18 months of meticulous planning, the Young Europe Africa

expedition set off in 1985 in eight 4x4 wheel drive vehicles taking 7 months to cross the Sahara desert down through Niger and Chad, the forests of the Congo on into Kenya. Here the team, led by Charlie, embarked on a series of projects one of which was to spend six weeks completing a section of fence around Lake Nakuru National Park which, in 1989, became home to a population of



PHOTOS BY: TUSK TRUST



Charlie attends many Tusk fund raising events.

the endangered black rhino. During this time, Charlie became acquainted with well known conservationists Maurice, Count Coreth, founder of Rhino Rescue, and Jock Dawson. “It was from them that I initially learned about the big conservation challenges of the time not the least of which was elephant and rhino poaching” says Charlie. He knew then that somehow he wished to make a meaningful contribution to conservation.

Back in the UK Charlie formed a financial services business and after a few years of ‘going it alone’ he allied it to the St James’s Place Wealth Management Group. This business provided him with a powerful network of high net-worth individuals. But how was he to satisfy his desire to do something for conservation in Africa? A long term friend was the actor Timothy Ackroyd and between them they decided to produce a TV film

using drama to portray the horrors of the ivory trade. However advice came from Oscar-winning film producer David Puttnam, (Charlie had been the DJ at his daughter’s wedding party), and he suggested that such a film had to be made for the large screen. Their plan was to donate the profits to conservation, which Charlie readily admits was naïve! Their feature film, ‘Lost in Africa’, whilst being distributed across 30 countries, sadly never made money, but it did result in the formation, in 1990, of Tusk Trust, as a charity dedicated to the conservation of African wildlife and habitats.

The first five years saw Charlie operate Tusk as a “hobby” while still continuing as a financial adviser. Initial funds were raised by holding parties and go-karting events. As the charity developed and major donors such as the Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust and Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones rock band were recruited, it became clear that some dedicated staff would be needed and a Director was employed.

Tusk established the inaugural Safaricom Marathon at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in 2000. Charlie attends the event every year with his staff as it has become Tusk’s most profitable fundraising event and one of the top ten marathons in the world.

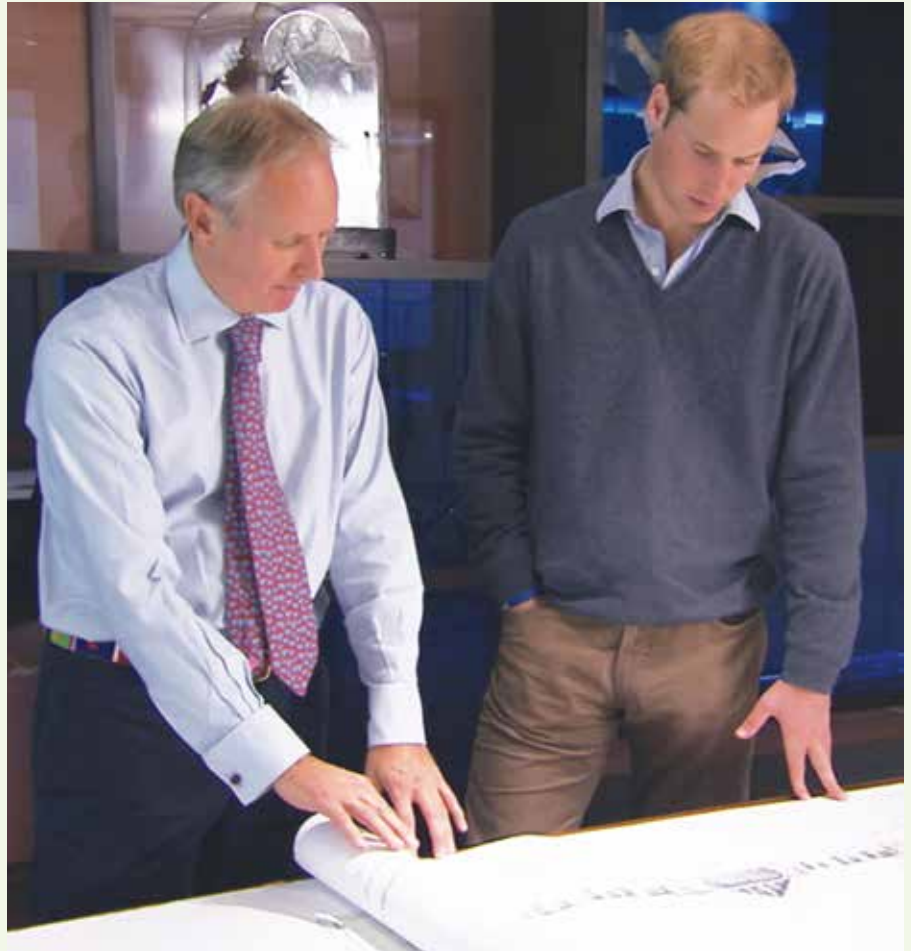
By 2002, Charlie decided he needed to give up his ‘commercial’ career to focus on the charity. He stepped down as a trustee of Tusk and became its first Chief Executive, a role he maintains today. In his words, Charlie is “the chief fundraiser, deal clincher and sponsorship negotiator seizing on the opportunities that arise from introductions that Tusk patrons, trustees, supporters and friends help to make”. Skills honed from his time broking marine insurance and from his financial services business have stood Charlie in good stead for persuading large organisations and major charitable trusts to contribute generously towards conservation.

The profile of Tusk was raised considerably when Prince William chose to give it his royal patronage in 2005. Through Tusk, the Prince has been



both vocal and visual in his support of conservation and this has led to the organisation, and Charlie in particular, becoming “a lightning rod for media comment be it TV, radio or the press”. It has also opened up new opportunities especially for Tusk in the US which registered Tusk USA Inc as a non-profit organisation based in New York in 2008. As its Chairman, Charlie now expects to visit the USA on fundraising trips up to four times a year.

Charlie spends some two or three days a week in London maintaining current and developing new donor relationships. “It is not enough to persuade people to make one-off donations. Conservation is a long term game and many of the projects which Tusk support need to be sustained over many years. We need to ensure that donors appreciate how their money is being spent and that it is producing positive outcomes for the wildlife, the habitat and the communities involved so that they will carry on supporting us.”



PHOTOS BY: TUSK TRUST



**Top:** Charlie briefs Tusk Patron Duke of Cambridge on a regular basis.

**Below:** The Duchess of Cambridge is introduced to Tusk grant recipient Tony Fitzjohn of Mkomazi National Park, Tanzania at the launch of the US Patrons Circle.



PHOTOS BY: TUSK TRUST



**Top: One of the half dozen annual visits Charlie takes to a Tusk project to review progress first hand. Below: Visiting a school as part of a Tusk community support project. Top Right: Managing the daily operations of the Tusk team.**

With 57 projects in 18 African countries, Charlie cannot hope to be 'hands-on' but makes a point of visiting five or six himself during a year for 10 days at a time. He says "whenever I get off the plane in Africa I get a real sense of belonging, I love Africa".

Vetting new projects is also an important role of the Chief Executive. Charlie says "With my team I try and seek out the best possible conservation investments based around the track record of individuals and then allow them to do what they are good at with Tusk acting as a communication vehicle for them". Charlie is proud of the

fact that Tusk has been "the financial incubator of some projects that would otherwise have never seen the light of day".

In the UK, Charlie communicates weekly with the Chairman of Trustees and attends the quarterly board meetings reporting on general operations, the impact of the project grants and future strategy. The board is the 'guardians of donor money' with a grant making committee separate from governance, financial and legal responsibilities.

High on the current agenda is creating an infrastructure to develop

and ensure the long term stability of the organisation and fundamental to this will be the appointment of an Executive Director.

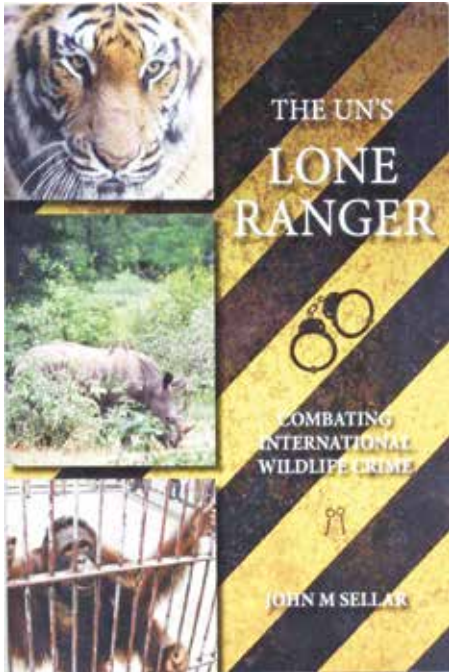
Charlie hopes that this new role will free him up from some of his day-to-day operational responsibilities so he can develop his network of contacts and respond to increased media interest in the charity's work.

As to the future Charlie says "The conservation challenges are greater than ever before but you have to be an optimist. I get my drive from the successes we get in the field. It is beyond me that we should be the generation that allows iconic species such as the elephant, rhino, lion, gorilla and wild dog to disappear".

Charlie Mayhew is a conservationist who has quite simply put his passion into practice. He is a prime example of someone who has used skills honed in the commercial world to make a significant contribution to wildlife conservation. It is to be hoped that others, from all walks of life, will consider a similar course thereby ensuring the conservation industry benefits from the widest variety of talents and expertise.

In recognition of his services to conservation in Africa, Charles Mayhew was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen in December 2005. ●

**For more information on the Tusk Trust visit [www.tusk.org](http://www.tusk.org)**



**The UN's Lone Ranger**  
**By John M. Sellar.**  
**Whittle Publishing. 201 Pages.**  
**Retail Price US\$24.95**

Unless you are involved in dealing with wildlife crime, there is not really a good appreciation of the extent of wildlife crime and the seriousness with which it needs to be addressed. It currently ranks third in financial value after the drugs and arms trades. There is a convention known as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) which addresses the regulation of international trade in wildlife and their products. For 14 years, John Sellar, from Scottish police roots, served in the CITES Secretariat as the lone enforcement officer, which gives rise to the title the UN Lone Ranger. I got to know John during my five years working in the CITES Secretariat as the Director of the Monitoring of the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme.

The first value of this book is therefore to bring a much greater understanding of just how seriously we should address wildlife crime. John does

this by introducing to you how he became part of the CITES Secretariat, and the relationship of the CITES convention and wildlife crime as the context for his work. He then devotes the next seven chapters to painting the reality of wildlife crime by expounding on the relationship between wildlife crime and organised crime; how the crime is committed in terms of its structure and sophistication; the manipulation that goes on of local communities, the use of 'mules' and the protection provided because the big money involved can pay for high level legal representation; the immunity produced by corruption, threats and even killing; the fraud involved, which is escalating thanks to the internet; the increasing involvement of 'crime' gangs; and the growing relationship between wildlife crime and terrorism, though the illegal ivory trade has long been associated with financing military strife. These chapters will certainly grab your attention and raise your eyebrows.

John then turns his attention to probably the four main targets of wildlife crime that would have dominated his attention during his 14 years. The first is the illegal trade in caviar and the heavy poaching of sturgeon. Whilst Elephants and Rhinos tend to capture the headlines, his opening remark that there can be few species under CITES regulation with such a history of criminality is correct and the story he tells is fascinating reading. He then moves onto a chapter on Elephants and Ivory which has certainly dominated the CITES Conference of Parties for the last

25 years. I think the CITES Conference of Parties (CoP) did get it wrong in allowing China to become a legal buyer and hindsight certainly shows it to have been a wrong decision, but this is John's story not mine. His reflections at the end of the chapter do raise the questions that still need answers. Following ivory, the next two chapters deal with Tigers and Rhinos respectively. Again his story provides detailed insights into the issues and challenges that the CITES parties and their Secretariat had to grapple with.

John's penultimate chapter uses his experience in asking "what we might do better". Careful thought and analysis has gone into this chapter and I do hope the issues he has raised are not just left to gather dust on the bookshelf. The final chapter is more of a philosophical envoi but some of his messages have significant reflections and deserve careful consideration. Given the current escalation in elephant and rhino poaching, this book could not have come at a more appropriate time. By reading it, we should have a better understanding about the scale of wildlife crime, its complexity and the desperate need to bringing the illegal decimation of the world's wildlife to a halt. This need is not based on emotion, but on a recognition that wildlife extinction has environmental, social, economic and cultural detrimental consequences, which few of us have really faced up to and evaluated. I believe John's book contributes to that evaluation. ●

**Reviewed by Nigel Hunter**  
**Head of Development, EAWLS**

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# TSAVO LEOPARD ENCOUNTERS VISITORS

BY RICHARD HATFIELD



Stratton Hatfield has a degree in natural resources and conservation management from the University of Kentucky. He is a passionate birdwatcher, amateur photographer and aspiring conservationist. He spends a lot of time in the bush

enjoying the spectacular wildlife that Africa has to offer.

In January of 2014 I went to Tsavo West National Park with my father and a family friend. While there we were fortunate to have a very unique encounter with a young male leopard. We have all traveled extensively throughout Africa searching for wildlife, but never before have we had such an exceptional sighting of this elusive species.

We found him in the shade of a croton on the side of the road at 9:15am. We spent

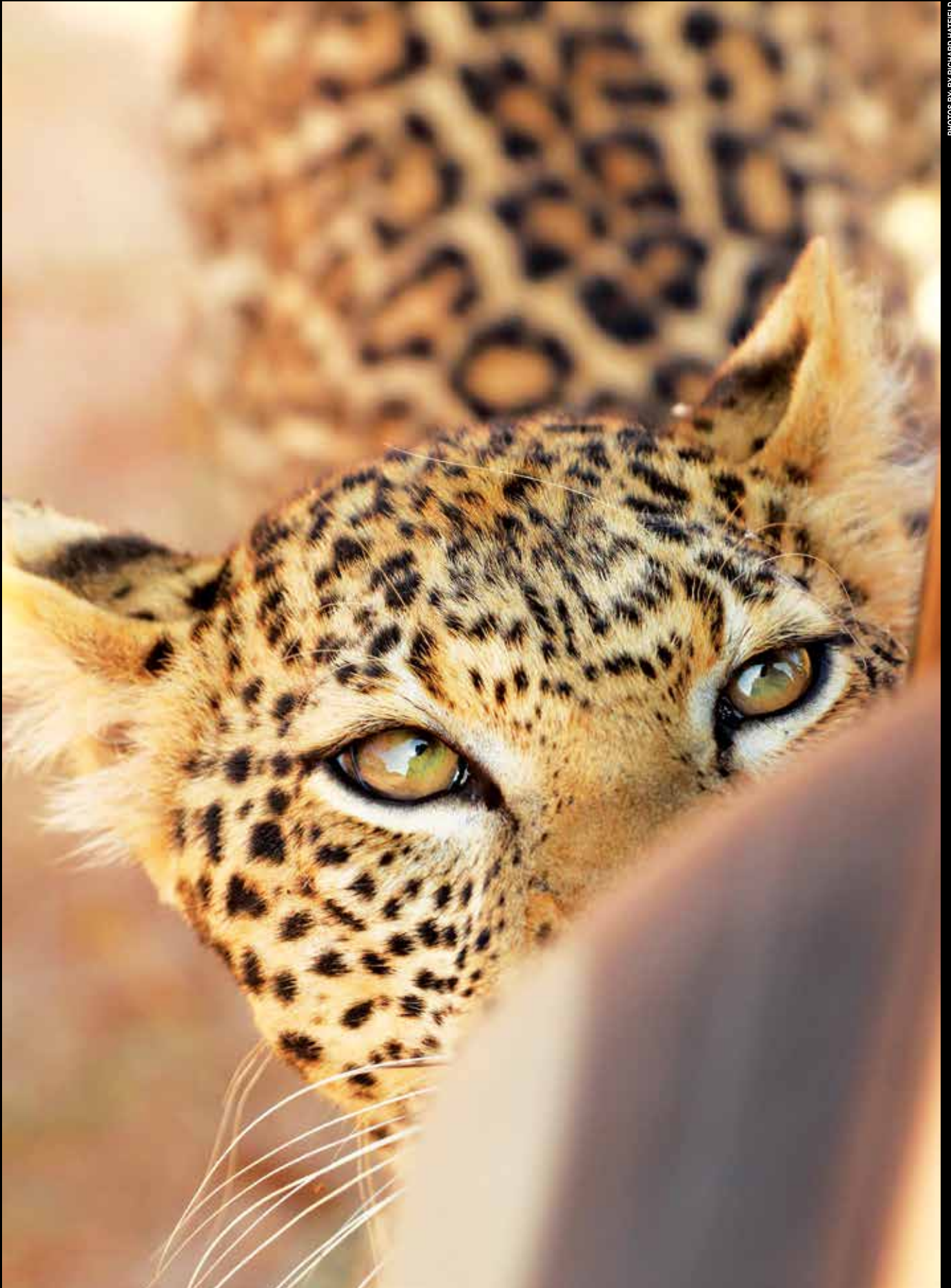
over an hour observing him as he paraded down the road. He was never very shy, always inquisitively staring at the car with his wide eyes. As he became more and more comfortable with our presence he began to delicately investigate our vehicle. First with just a careful sniff and a lick, but then he began to methodically search the front of our car. He even placed both front paws on the bull bar staring at us intently through the windscreen. We all asked ourselves if we had worked recently with anything that might attract a cat near our vehicle, but we just couldn't figure out why he was so curious.

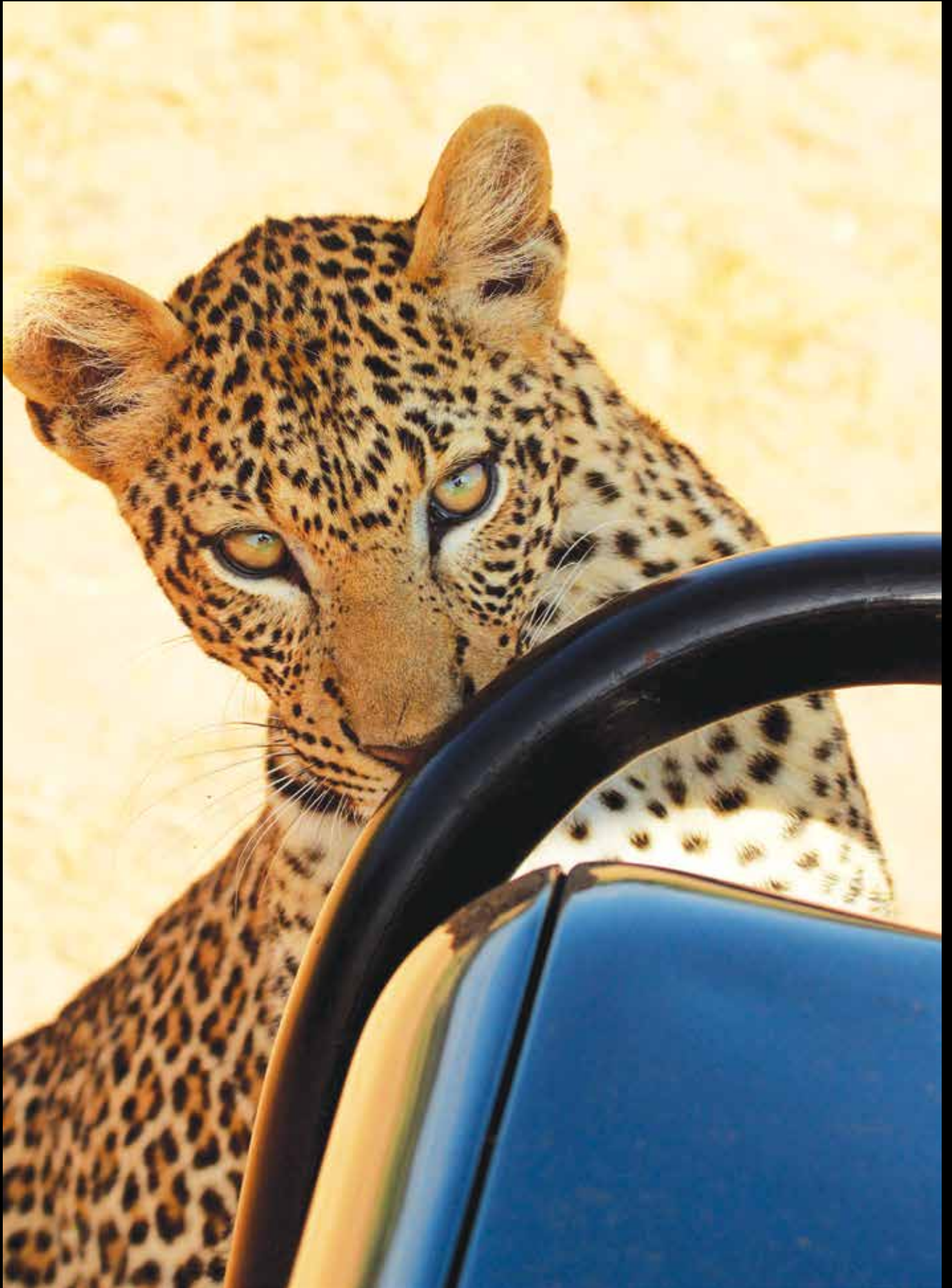
During his vehicle inspections he would periodically search for food in the roadside vegetation. At one point he stalked a pair of yellow-neck spurfowl, acrobatically leaping into the air as they flushed from cover. Fortunately for the fowl his leap was mistimed and he landed back on solid ground

with an almost embarrassed expression on his face.

After ensuring that our vehicle was not of interest he walked towards a small seasonal pool and laid down. We all thought that he would rest here for the day, but little did we know that he had one more special sighting for us. All of a sudden he got up and crouched. We spotted a Scrub hare bounding cautiously through the grass. He made his move and disappeared into the brush. We suspected that we had lost him when all of a sudden he burst from cover heading straight for our car hot in pursuit of the hare. This time the hare won the race and he was forced to give up. He was quite disgruntled by his lack of success and slowly moved off into the surrounding bush. At this point we proceeded down the road, leaving him to his own devices as he wandered the immense Tsavo landscape in search of his next victim. ●







PHOTOS BY: BY RICHARD HATFIELD



# DAVID LOVATT SMITH

KENYA NATIONAL PARKS WARDEN, CONSERVATIONIST AND HISTORIAN OF MAU MAU

28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1930 - 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2013

BY PAUL LOVATT-SMITH



Aged 30 at Ol Tukai, Amboseli

David Lovatt Smith could have had a little idea of the influence that Kenya would have on the rest of his life when in 1950 as a young man of 20 he arrived by ship in Mombasa from England in order to work on a dairy farm at Limuru.

After 18 months, the job fell through and he found himself looking for work in Nairobi. Having a keen interest in wild life, he walked in to the Head Office of Kenya National Parks and asked for a job. The Director, Mervyn Cowie, happened to come out of his office just as his Secretary was preparing to give David the brush-off. On being told by Mr Cowie that he would have to join the

queue of applicants and that, anyway, there was no money for more salaries, David on the spur of the moment offered to work for free until he was called up for National Service in a few months' time. This quick-thinking and his enthusiasm and politeness impressed Cowie, who actually needed help at Amboseli National Reserve. Rather amazingly in a couple of weeks David found himself employed as a Junior Assistant Warden and being driven down to Amboseli by Cowie himself.

Due to an injury suffered in a car accident, his call-up was delayed and he spent the next 11 months working under

the Warden, "Tabs" Taberer, on the magnificent game-filled Amboseli plains at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. It was a steep learning curve for such a novice, much of it concerned with dealing with the landowners, the Kisongo Maasai people. One evening while covering for the Warden who was on leave, two elders came to his door and demanded that he come and shoot a lion which had killed two of their cattle. As his job was to conserve, he decided there was nothing for it but to deliberately miss. After several cramped hours in the dark by the carcasses, with the lions roaring close by, a shape appeared but he could not see the gunsight and when he asked his Ranger to shine a torch, the shape turned out to be a hyena which ran off. The disappointed Maasai allowed him to go home at that point.

He joined the Kenya Regiment in January 1953 and after training in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), saw action in "C" and "B" Companies patrolling in the Aberdare Forest of Kikuyuland. In August 1954, due to his knowledge of the Swahili and Kikuyu languages, he was appointed as one of several Field Intelligence Officers (FIO's). By providing nothing more than reasoned argument and creature comforts the FIO's recruited captured gang members and deserters into their unofficial "pseudo-gangs". The pseudo-gangs would trek into the forest at night pretending to be a visiting gang and gain entrance peacefully to the real gangs' hide-outs. The pseudo-gang would then reveal their identities and try to persuade the real gang members to give themselves up. This "hearts and minds" approach was successful and some say instrumental in the eventual disintegration of the forest gangs and the end of the conflict.





Surveying a community-owned conservancy, Amboseli

In later years, he wrote and published two books about Mau Mau. “My Enemy, My Friend”, published in 2000 is a novel about a young Kikuyu man who gets caught up in a gang. The character is based on one of the members of his pseudo-gang. His second book, “Kenya, Kikuyu and Mau Mau”, published in 2005, is a history of the conflict based on his and others’ personal experience as well as extensive research. As someone who did not excel at school he was pleased that this history became accepted as a key reference by academic Historians. Towards the end of his life he advised the UK Government during the 2012-13 High Court case concerning claims of torture and abuse of Mau Mau detainees. Although he accepted that there had been some rare instances of abuse, he and his former colleagues were deeply disappointed by the UK Government’s refusal to mount any defence.

At the end of his military service in March 1955, he returned to Amboseli and spent most of the next five years there, apart from a 9 month secondment to Tsavo West National Park in 1958. By this time, Amboseli had developed a bad reputation with visitors due to the large herds of Maasai livestock competing for water with the wildlife. The sudden appearance of new spring

water created an opportunity to remove the cattle by creating a separate watering area. David was instrumental in cutting a long canal over several months which eventually achieved this goal to the satisfaction of all parties and, many said, saved Amboseli as a reserve. This story was the subject of his first book “Amboseli, Nothing Short of a Miracle” which was published in 1986.

David met and married Jean Whitestone in 1959. His final years with the Royal National Parks of Kenya were spent as Acting Warden in the Aberdares and Nairobi Parks. At independence in 1962, with a young family and facing an uncertain future in Kenya, he returned to farming in East Sussex. But Kenya was in his blood and in 1987, as soon as the children had left school, he took up work as a safari guide in order to participate in the conservation of Amboseli again.

In 1974 the 39,000 hectare Ol Tukai area of Amboseli had become a National Park and was now generating significant income from tourist revenues. The trouble was that the Maasai owners of the surrounding land into which the wildlife dispersed were not receiving the benefits which they had been promised when they relinquished the Park to the Government. In retaliation they were killing wildlife including most of the

famous rhinos. In 1988 a low point was reached when seven lions and their cubs were poisoned. Reasoning with the Parks and Government authorities came to nothing and he and other conservationists became convinced that wildlife conservation in Amboseli would only succeed if the Maasai received financial benefit directly from their own reserves and tourist businesses in the area around the National Park.

Over the next few years, in collaboration with other conservationists, conservation bodies and tourist businesses, he spent a great deal of time with the Maasai, gradually winning the trust of the key people in the area - respected elders and educated young men and women. In the process he gained a much deeper understanding of their culture, beliefs and system of land tenure. He organised several sponsored visits to the UK for individuals in order that they could see UK conservation projects in action. This dedication helped convince them that they could carry out such projects. By 1994 new Group Ranch (land-owning cooperatives) Committees had been elected and work on the ground started. Community-owned Conservancies now exist at Kitirua (12,000 hectares), Kimana (4,000 hectares), Eselenkei (7,000 hectares) and Satao Elerie (2,000 hectares). All of these have lodges or campsites and are generating income from wildlife tourism to the benefit of both people and wildlife. This story and his description of Maasai culture are documented in his final book published in 2008: “Amboseli, A Miracle Too Far?”.

Dame Daphne Sheldrick, wife of his former Royal National Parks of Kenya colleague David Sheldrick and a renowned Kenya conservationist, described him as “an extremely dedicated conservationist and a very dear friend who has been a role model in this respect”. He retired from active conservation work in Kenya in 2001 and lived in East Sussex, becoming a recognised expert in the construction of riding surfaces. He is survived by his wife, Jean and their son and daughter. ●

# THE DANGERS OF LITTERING IN THE PARK - TSAVO CHEETAH CUB ALMOST DIES

SHAZAAD KASMANI

Kenya Wildlife Service Honorary Game Warden & Wildlife Photographer



**Top Left:** After playing with it for a while, the bag got stuck in the Cubs teeth.

**Top Right:** The Cheetah Cub picking up the canvas bag which was discarded in the park.

**Below Left:** The Cub then took the bag to show mom who was visibly not too impressed.

**Below Right:** The Cub tried to shake the bag to dislodge it from her teeth.

**O**n a recent trip to Tsavo East, what seemed like a perfectly rewarding day photographing a Cheetah and her Cub that I have been monitoring for 6 months now (Malkia & Binti) almost turned into tragedy for this beautiful endangered animal.

Despite there being several notices at the park gates and regular articles highlighting the dangers of throwing rubbish in the park, some people still ignorantly throw out the trash without realizing the deadly consequences it has to wildlife.

So for those of you who are guilty of this behavior, thinking it is ok to do so

because "its only a bottle cap or just a plastic bag", this story is for you!

This Cheetah Cub found a discarded canvas bag hidden in the grass while walking with mom and curiously picked it up. Excited with its new find, the bag quickly became a play toy and after having its share of fun for about ten minutes, when the time came to move on and let go of the bag, the strings became caught in its teeth.

In a desperate attempt to shake the bag loose, the canvas bag got tangled around the cubs throat turning the situation critical. After vigorously shaking to free itself, the cub luckily

managed to get loose from the bags deadly grip.

After Malkia and Binti walked away, I later went to collect the canvas bag to prevent further incidents.

Ladies and Gentlemen, because of someones recklessness with rubbish, a mother would have lost a daughter, the world would have lost an endangered species and Kenya would have lost its heritage. Kindly Stop littering the Park. Carry a rubbish bag in your vehicle and educate your friends and children on the risks of littering. ●

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