

Animal Welfare

April 2017 - June 2017

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF ANIMAL WELFARE & PEOPLE IN ECOSYSTEMS



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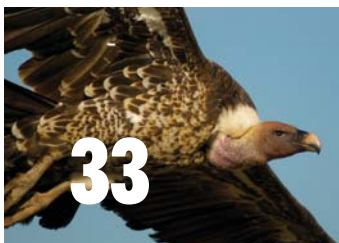
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Animal Welfare

January 2017 - March 2017

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The cover photo: Reticulated Giraffe in Northern Kenya

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Editor's Note



In the last decade, Africa has experienced a tremendous and uncontrollable infrastructural boom. Kenya has not been left out in this momentous drift. As a matter of fact, it has been estimated that the amount of infrastructural and technological advancements made in Kenya in the last 10 years are incomparable to anything done over the last 30 years.

While this is in all manner commendable, it is noteworthy to highlight that major steps have also been made to protect our animals. This has been achieved through formulation, introduction or amendments to various acts of parliament, coupled with implementation of rules and

regulations governing various animal welfare issues that had been previously neglected or under utilized. This magazine highlights some of the efforts that have largely catapulted developments in animal welfare in Kenya spanning from partnerships, animal welfare education, innovations, information dissemination and awareness creation among others.

However, it is prudent to acknowledge that this has been no smooth ride for Kenya, her neighbours and Africa at large. Borrowing from the words of Jim MacNeill, 'Growth and sustainability is based on forms and processes of development that do not undermine the integrity of the environment on which they depend'. However, not finding the balance between maintaining environmental integrity and development is the most shared verdict within the human race. Usually, actions perpetrated by humans in the bid to improve livelihoods and sustain them result in a retaliatory behavior by the animals inhabiting the respective habitats under threat by these actions". This edition features current examples of direct clash between development and the welfare of animal habitats (see page 6-8).

Africa is renowned for its rich culture and heritage that stems from deep rooted history, myths and beliefs. Kenya embodies this fact by presenting a smorgasbord of more than 45 diverse cultures and beliefs all in one serving. In rare occurrences,

traditional belief systems contradict with modernism and religion resulting in suffering of either animals or humans (see page 25-26).

One common feature shared in all belief systems and cultures, is the love for animals. However this love cannot negate the risk of zoonotic disease transmission from animals to humans and vice versa.

One of the most common threats in Kenya is rabies, which is entirely preventable and 98 per cent transmissible by man's best friend the dog, but affects all mammals. While efforts are made to manage rabies in Kenya, how does the inadequate knowledge about it and the eradication efforts influence how we treat our animals? (Read more about this on page 9-12).

The rate of development and change is only projected to increase in the coming years. The culmination of this, if not well managed, will negatively affect the existing harmonious relations between humans and animals. This magazine presents current and practical scenarios that depict the current situation of animal welfare in Africa in the 21st century and the opportunity cost of our actions thereof. I wish you an enjoyable and insightful reading as I encourage you to share your thoughts and stories to educate other readers on animals and their welfare on our Facebook pages or through info@anaw.org.

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Treating a zebra with a snare wound

Trapped in the Wild

The Agony of Ensnared Animals

By Sebastian Mwanza

A zeal of three zebras came into view as the rescue team looked out for ensnared animals in the expansive Soysambu Conservancy.

The zebras were dragging lethal wires ensnared around their limbs. With the help of binoculars, the rescue team could see that the animals' limbs were badly swollen and that the poor animals were in excruciating pain. They were agonisingly limping away, after noticing the visitors.

The team made a quick call to find out whether Dr Ephantus Ndamberi, a vet who was to join them had arrived at the conservancy. Dr Ndamberi however said that he had been assigned another task at another conservancy and would only be available the next day.

The team of rangers and animal welfare workers returned to their vehicle dejectedly.

'The thought of leaving these deeply wounded animals unattended is pricking my innermost soul like

a needle," said one of the team members.

"Will the poachers win the second round, finishing what they began?" Another member of the crew asked no one in particular as the team boarded their vehicle and drove back to Nairobi.

The crew held onto the hope that Dr Ndamberi would show up the following day to desnare the animals and end their suffering.

True to his word, Dr Ndamberi arrived at the conservancy the next day and his team spent the better part of the morning trying to locate the wounded animals.

By late afternoon, the doctor had removed the snares from the zebras and a *Rothschild's* giraffe. A snared buffalo that had been spotted the

previous day could not be traced. The search team wondered if it had fallen into the hands of poachers.

Poachers often set up snares – wire nooses that trap and often kill any animal unlucky enough to cross their path—along wildlife routes. Animals caught in the snares struggle frantically to escape, often becoming dismembered, or strangled in the process. Those ensnared but non-fatally injured suffer immensely before death.

Animal conservation and welfare groups regularly carry out missions to search and rescue ensnared animals. The Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) conducts the exercise twice every month in different conservancies.

This particular event had been organised by ANAW, Kenya Wildlife Service rangers and Soysambu rangers.

Animal conservation and welfare groups regularly carry out missions to search and rescue ensnared animals. The Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) conducts the exercise twice every month in different conservancies



KENYANS SPEAK OUT; **Protect Iconic Nairobi National Park** **A Chronology of Events**

By Sidney Quntai and Catherine Chumo

A group of people march along one of the main streets in Nairobi, enroute to the Office of the President.

A man holds up placards with their message to President Uhuru Kenyatta. 'Re-route SGR away from the park,' reads one of the placards.

Conservationist groups and members of communities living near the Nairobi National Park have been holding protest marches since September 2016, when the government announced that the Standard Gauge Railway, one of its flagship infrastructural projects, would cut through the park.

In December 2016, the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) issued a license allowing the construction of the railway through the park. Conservation organisations have gone to court seeking to have the commencement of the project stopped until issues they have raised are addressed.

The conservationists say the railway will destroy the iconic park, which is home to more than 100 animal species and a critical breeding ground for rhinos and other endangered animals.

Experts involved in the mapping of



Photocredits: Paolo Torchio

the railway route had provided seven options, four of which cut through the park in different areas.

On September 13th, 2016, the Kenya Wildlife Service chairman, Dr Richard Leakey and Atanas Maina, the Managing Director of Kenya Railways announced at a press conference that route number four had been chosen as the most viable route.

The route cuts across a 6-km stretch of the savannah area of park. The government said it was the most cost effective and the least likely to impact the park negatively, because the railway will overpass the park on an 18-meter high bridge.

NO to Railway through the Park

The Kenya Coalition for Wildlife Conservation and Management (KCWCM), a national network of conservation organisations, communities and individuals, launched an advocacy and media campaign dubbed, 'Save Nairobi National Park'

to exert pressure on the government to reroute the SGR away from the park.

The coalition, together with activist Okiya Omtatah, obtained orders from the National Environment Tribunal in September, barring any activities along the 120-km SGR Phase 2A until the petition challenging the construction of the railway across the park is heard and determined.

More than 4,000 members of the Maasai community signed a petition asking President Uhuru to intervene and save the Nairobi National Park from imminent destruction. The petition stated that Kenya is a world leader in conservation matters and that if the President failed to stop the decision to have the SGR going through the Nairobi National Park, the country's standing in the world would suffer irreparable damage.

Daniel Shungea Pasha, a resident of Oloosirkon village, which is located on the southern border of the park, says members of his community are passionate about protecting the park because it is their heritage.

"During the colonial period, at the time of the Second World War, the Maasai occupied the land that is currently called Nairobi National Park," Pasha says. "We all felt this area needed protection; that it was important for us to respect the animals and so we moved to Kajiado County and declared Athi River the boundary for the park. If you look inside, you will see the vestiges of the homesteads of those who lived there. Their graves are there too. Since we are neighbours to the Nairobi National Park, it is especially important [that] we continue to respect wildlife as we did when we gave up our land in the 1940s."

In a documentary titled 'Reroute the SGR', other community members voiced their opposition to the construction of the railway through the park.

Mpukori Parmisa Ole Semei, a community member of the Maasai community, says constructing the railway through the park will be detrimental to its biodiversity. During the construction of the Southern Bypass, which cuts through the edge of the park taking away 83 acres of park land, some animals left the park

and wandered into residential areas, Semei says.

A Contested ESIA Report

If there's anything that galvanised the attention of conservation organisations in 2016, it has to be the Standard Gauge Railway. The organisations banded together to oppose the proposed construction of the railway across the park.

The conservationists also rejected an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) report that is said to have informed the choice of the railway's route.

The ESIA report states that the railway is likely to have some negative effects on the park such as change in movement, social behaviour and general behaviour of wildlife due to noise pollution and introduction of underpasses in wildlife dispersal areas.

It also outlines mitigation measures that will minimise these effects. Construction of the railway on concrete beams rather than on an embankment that would have divided the park into two, and the installation of noise deflectors are some of the measures proposed to mitigate effects of the railway on the park.

Conservation groups however say this report does not reveal the true extent of the railway's impact on the park and have urged the NEMA to demand for a fresh study.

In its submission to NEMA, the Conservation Alliance of Kenya (CAK) said the ESIA process was rushed and the public participation process highly flawed and inadequate.

"The democratic rights of Kenyan citizens for full public participation in environmental governance processes have been undermined in this instance. Ground breaking of the tunnel at Ngong commenced in June 2016 and the ESIA was disclosed at the end of October 2016. This means that the project commenced before the ESIA was approved and a license issued. "The ESIA should be rejected on this basis alone," a representative from the conservation group says.

Rodney van der Ree, an independent expert contracted to review the report offered a damning verdict.



"The ESIA for the Nairobi to Enosupukia railway is poorly written, lacks many specific details and is biased towards supporting a single preferred alignment," Ree says. "Importantly, and most glaringly deficient, is the absence in the ESIA of consideration of an alignment that avoids the NNP entirely."

Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) requested NEMA not to issue an EIA licence for the SGR Phase 2A if it proposes to pass through the Nairobi National Park.

"I find contradictions where the consultant states there will be impact on wildlife but at the same time supports the route through the park," says Josphat Ngonyo, ANAW's Executive Director, in a submission on behalf of the Organisation and its partners.

The government, on its part, says the ESIA process was above board and the decision to route the railway through the park is final.

"We publicised the event for everyone to attend and give their views," said Maina, the Kenya Railways' Managing Director during a public forum in November. "We have done what the law requires of us. If there are people with views about the project, the government is ready to listen and even bring them on board to monitor the construction."

On January 16, 2017, the communities together with civil society organizations held a press conference to protest against NEMA for issuing

a permit against public and expert advice as state in a press release. The press conference caught the attention of journalists from many major media houses.

"Therefore, it is dumb-founding to learn that the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), as the national custodian of a safe environment, issue a permit for the project, based on the inconclusive EIA report, to construct through the Park despite the inadequate mitigation measures given in the report." The statement said.

They called upon the Chairman of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Dr Richard Leakey for failing to Nairobi National Park.

Development versus Conservation Dilemma

The Standard Gauge Railway, which starts from Mombasa and runs

along the northern corridor to Nairobi, Kisumu and Malaba, is seen as a major development milestone that will catalyse economic growth in Kenya and the East African region. According to Construction Business Review, the SGR project will contribute to the GDP growth of at least 1.5 per cent during and after construction.

The railway is expected to improve regional connectivity within Kenya and across the East African Community, improve efficiencies in freight and passenger transport and alleviate congestion on the highways.

Kenyans are confronted by a situation where they want development and at the same time want to conserve their wildlife heritage. As the country continues moving in the path of development, scenarios such as this are likely to recur often.

Coming up is the LAPSET project, which involves construction of a port in Lamu, inter-regional highways connecting Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia, an oil pipeline from Lamu to Juba, inter-regional Standard Gauge Railway lines and three international airports among other projects. All these activities are likely to affect the environment and wildlife habitats in one way or another.

This is why the Save Nairobi Park proponents are seeking a solution agreeable to everyone because what happens at the park may set a precedent to what happens whenever similar situations arise.

The railway is expected to improve regional connectivity within Kenya and across the East African Community, improve efficiencies in freight and passenger transport and alleviate congestion on the highways.



RABIES AND ANIMAL WELFARE

Caring for your pet could help keep disease away

By Dr. Maryanne Kagai

During a school holiday in 2003, Barnaba Korir and his wife Dr Agnes Korir had taken their seven-year-old daughter Sharon and her siblings to visit their grandparents in Sironoi, Nandi County.

Sharon spent most of her time playing with her cousins. In one of the play sessions, one of her playmates informed the group that there was a guava tree at the neighbour's yard.

Excited by the new adventure, Sharon and her playmates headed to where the tree was and climbed in turns to pick the juicy guavas. The children's screams and laughter alerted the family dog.

The dog approached them menacingly and bore its teeth

viciously, ready to attack. It then started running after the children.

Sharon's playmates were able to escape because they could run fast and they knew of all the corners to hide. Little Sharon was at a disadvantage and could not run as fast as the other children. She was also asthmatic.

The angry dog attacked her. When her parents got word of the attack, they rushed the little girl to a hospital which was miles away. All possible interventions were carried out to try save the little girl. Despite all the efforts, little Sharon died of rabies at the tender age of seven.

Rabies in humans

Rabies is a very serious disease caused by a virus. It is mainly a disease that attacks animals but humans can also get rabies if bitten or scratched by an infected animal. The virus infects the brain, causing

Rabies Facts

- 100 % preventable by vaccination
- 99% transmitted by dogs
- 99% fatal once symptoms develop
- 95% of rabies occur in Africa and Asia
- 40% affected are children under 15 years



the animal to exhibit unusual, often aggressive behaviour.

The rabies virus is present in the saliva of the infected animal and is spread when the saliva gets into a bite or scratch wound.

Symptoms of the disease are not immediate and sometimes, it takes weeks or even months before any symptoms are seen. The first symptoms of rabies may be very similar to those of the flu, including general weakness or discomfort, fever or headache.

These symptoms may last for days. There may be discomfort or a prickling or itching sensation at the site of bite. Additional symptoms as the disease gets worse are anxiety, confusion, agitation, seizures, abnormal behaviour, hallucinations and insomnia. Human rabies almost always results in death.

Prevention and treatment

Rabies infection can be prevented, even after a bite or a scratch from an infected animal occurs. Wounds should be washed with soap and a lot of water and may be rinsed with an antiseptic. This will reduce the risk of the rabies virus entering the body.

A series of injections, including rabies vaccine and human rabies

immune globulin, can prevent rabies, even if the virus enters the body. This preventive strategy is called post-exposure prophylaxis.

Rabies immune globulin, which is administered during post-exposure prophylaxis, contains antibodies against the rabies virus and provides immediate protection against rabies infection, whereas the rabies vaccine provides protection within approximately two weeks.

Although rabies is 99 per cent fatal, it is 100 per cent preventable, through annual vaccination of dogs. Rabid domestic dogs transmit at least 98 per cent of human rabies in Kenya.

However, it is estimated that 80 per cent of the dogs in Kenya have owners thus accessible for vaccination.

An animal that is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express natural behaviours and is not suffering from pain, fear or stress is said to be in a good animal welfare state. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention, veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, and nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter.

Pet medical care comprises of annual anti-rabies vaccinations, regular de-worming, grooming and nail clipping. An annual anti-rabies

An animal that is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express natural behaviours and is not suffering from pain, fear or stress is said to be in a good animal welfare state

booster infers the animal with an all-year-round immunity against rabies. Keeping animals healthy can help stop diseases from infecting humans.

The Korirs' anti-rabies campaign

Following the tragic loss of their daughter, Barnaba and his wife Agnes founded the Sharon Live on Foundation, through which they educate communities about rabies. The foundation has held more than 60 sensitisation sessions in different communities to raise awareness on the risk of rabies and its prevention.

"Whenever I get the opportunity, I always share the rabies story for it is not known by many and it is just a story until they understand that rabies can kill their loved ones," Dr Korir says. "I live to help share the message and eliminate rabies."

Dr Korir works with strategic partners like the Kenya Veterinary Association to ensure rabies control initiatives continue to run.



RETURN TO THE WILD; Kenya the Lion Journeys Home

By Catherine Chumo

When Marsha Little landed at the airport, she could not believe that she was finally in Kenya. Perhaps volunteering at the Center for Animal Research and Education (CARE), a big cat sanctuary, evoked a sense of nearness to the wild earth and its animals but it was nothing compared to setting foot on African soil, watching gazelles and impalas prancing over bushes, zebras grazing, buffaloes grunting in herds, elephants wallowing in mud and different bird species flying free in the Kenyan savannah.

Marsha checked for Lion Kenya's ashes before towing her bag which had everything she would need for the next three weeks. Together with her colleagues, she checked in at

Margarita House ready to take part in the veterinarian program organized and carried out by Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) and Vet Treks. She was delighted to come to Kenya to volunteer for the Vet vaccination program. She aided in vaccinating the dogs, cats and donkeys and gave a needed hand in the spay and neuter exercises in Naivasha and Voi.

In Tsavo East National Park, she leaned towards the window eager to see the herd of elephants roaming the park that she almost forgot to take a picture. She could not stop the tears as she watched the magnificent creatures trudge through the grassy plains of Tsavo East National Park. This was a dream come true for her.

"I had dreamed of coming to Africa since I was a young girl. I have always

felt drawn to wildlife, particularly elephants, lions and great apes. I read books and articles, watched documentaries and immersed myself in every way possible in these animals. And my greatest dream was to see them in the wild, in their natural environment. I longed for this throughout my life and can't believe this dream finally came true. I knew my heart lay in Africa with the animals and when I arrived, it felt as if I had come home." The soft, loving, kind-hearted woman wrote in an email.

Her connection to Africa's nature was a prelude to one of the most significant occurrences in her life.

When her friend, Karen told her of the program that she was planning to participate in, she did not give it a second thought.

"My friend, Karen Manuel, received an email from Rhea Dodd, one of the leaders and board members of ANAW in the US. She invited Karen, who is a veterinarian, to come to Kenya and told her about Vetreks. Karen approached me, knowing I had always dreamed of coming to Kenya and that I wanted to help animals, and said, "this trip was made to order for you".

I too felt it was a perfect fit and made the decision to come.”

She thought of her friend, Kenya, the Lion. She immediately applied to join. It was clear on her mind that a major part of her trip would be to finally bring Kenya home. She didn't know how, where or when but she knew she would set Kenya free on her native land. A lioness was returning home.

Kenya was a lioness who was born in captivity in the US. The lioness had experienced a very difficult life in the beginning. She was bought and sold in pet trade to a family who did not know how to care for her. Unfortunately, the laws in Texas regarding wildlife were not as stringent as they need to be. The family up and moved when Kenya was about two years old and left her behind, abandoned and emaciated. She had a red collar around her neck that was growing into her skin. It was at this time that CARE's director, Heidi Krahn, stepped in and rescued her, along with a tiger on the property.

During Marsha's first visit to CARE in 2004, she spent a weekend learning about tigers, lions, leopards and cougars. The volunteers were asked to choose a cat to spend time with throughout the weekend, observing, learning and bonding. Rather than choosing a cat, Marsha asked Heidi, which cat needed someone the most. She immediately said Sprinkles (Kenya). That was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Due to her early beginnings, Kenya, then known as Sprinkles, was a very hurt and angry lioness, bearing

“ Words do not seem adequate to paint a picture of Kenya, for she was a lion one needed to experience. She had such a presence. ”

emotional scars. When she first met Kenya (during the weekend visit), the lion was twelve years old and slightly arthritic. Caregivers were attempting to treat her arthritis, but with limited success as she didn't trust people. They asked if she might try to give her a meatball containing her medication.

“I slowly and quietly went over to where she was sitting and simply sat with her. I was warned that she probably would not tolerate my being this close to her, but she seemed to accept my presence. After a little while she walked over to me and took the meatball. We then continued to sit together. The following day Kenya was at the top of her hill quite far away in her large enclosure. I sat down next to the fence and waited. Much to my surprise she came over to me again and a lifelong friendship was born. Over the years we have spent countless hours sitting together. I came to know her pride mates as well. I have never had such a deep bond with an animal as I had with Kenya, even though I have had many strong bonds with animals in the past. I felt as if I had known Kenya forever.” Marsha explained.

But how did it come about that she was named Kenya? Marsha laughed. “Originally Kenya was given

the name Sprinkles, because as a young cub she would pounce on the water hose when she played. Her claws punctured the hose and caused water to sprinkle out. After I got to know her it seemed that the name Sprinkles did not fit this noble, strong lioness I had come to know. So, I asked permission to give her a more suitable name. (CARE has an adoption program similar to the one at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. I had adopted Kenya and remained her “adoptive mother” until her death.) After much thought and reflection, the name Kenya kept coming to me, and so she became Kenya. I felt this name was a perfect fit and that she was happy with her new name.”

Kenya aged gracefully and died peacefully in 2011 just shy of her 20th birthday. During Marsha's last visit with Kenya as they sat under the stars, and knowing her time was near, she made a promise to her. She promised that if she was lucky enough to ever make it to Africa, she would take some of her ashes and spread them there.

Marsha remembers Kenya well even after five years of her passing. “Kenya was a beautiful, strong, noble and courageous lioness. Beneath her guarded exterior she had a very loving heart. She formed strong bonds with



Free at Last
Kenya finds resting place in the African wild

Marsha throwing Kenya's ashes at Mudanda rock in, Tsavo East National Park



Teenage Elephant quenches thirst below Mudanda Rock

her pride mates, but did not feel as comfortable around people. I don't know why she accepted me, but I am eternally grateful for our friendship. We spent hours sitting beside each other; sometimes talking, often gazing into each other's eyes or simply just "being" in each other's presence."

To Marsha, it seemed appropriate to be able to spread Kenya's ashes there. The first park they visited was Tsavo East National Park and she fell in love with it, not only for its beauty and wildlife, but the large groups of elephants we encountered. Elephants are my other great love and they simply took my breath away. They had a wonderful wildlife expert, Kahindi Lekalhaile. She appreciated his wealth of knowledge about animals, but also felt she had met a kindred spirit in his deep love for animals.

"I told Kahindi about Kenya and her ashes, and he offered to do a ceremony. I was deeply touched that he would do this for her. On our last morning in Tsavo we drove through a beautiful valley surrounded by magnificent mountains silhouetted against a dawn sky as the glow of daybreak pierced the horizon. It was the perfect backdrop as peaceful gazelles and elephants grazed beneath its splendor. I felt it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen. As we reached an ancient rock outcropping, Mudanda Rock, the first streaks of sunlight rose in the distance painting splashes of color across the sky as a shimmering light filtered through to the valley below. It was a magical place, and as I shared Kenya's story and spread her ashes,

it all seemed perfect. Kahindi told me that lions often sit on this rock and I knew Kenya would be pleased. It seemed to all come full circle as I had often imagined her sitting beneath a sunrise or sunset gazing across a beautiful plain. I felt her spirit and I felt at peace."

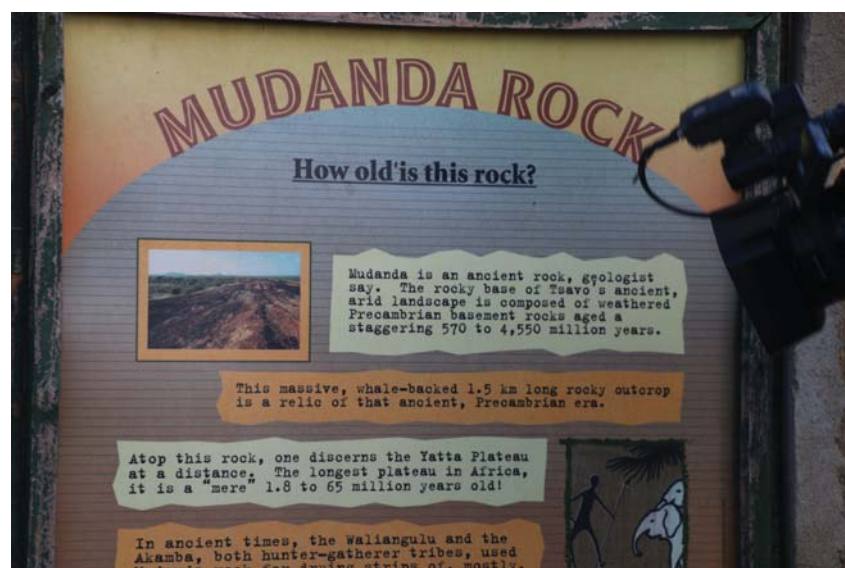
This was where Kenya was set free at last. The half of the ashes were carried by the wind into the valley and the nearby waterhole where all sorts of wildlife came to drink. The other half was spread in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve.

"Her death left a huge hole in my heart and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't think of her. She touched me deeply and changed my life because of the deep love I had for her. I wrote her memorial for CARE and I hope it reflects her spirit.

"Words do not seem adequate to paint a picture of Kenya, for she was a lion[ess] one needed to experience. She had such a presence. Kenya had a painful beginning in her young life, which made it difficult for her to trust at times, but she overcame this and lived a long and peaceful life.

Underneath her sometimes guarded exterior, she had a huge heart. She was beautiful, strong, independent, wild, intelligent, loving and faithful.

Kenya was an old soul. Her eyes spoke volumes, and her spirit exuded kindness and love. To her adoptive mother she was not only a friend, but a soul mate. She will be deeply missed. But, at last she can follow her heart's desires – running freely over wild plains or basking under the glow of savannah sunsets."



After CITES; What Next?

Mixed fortunes for elephants at 2016 Cites Conference



BY Wairimu Michengi

Elephants were a major talking point at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) conference in South Africa for a number of reasons.

For starters, the brutal killings of elephants for their tusks are a major concern worldwide. About 30,000 elephants are killed in Africa every year – that is one elephant every 15 minutes according to Tusk, a conservation organisation. About 70 per cent of Africa's elephant population has been wiped out in the past 10 years, according to the organisation.

Another reason is that the international ban on ivory trade expired in 2016 and member states needed to come up with a resolution that will guide the protection of the animals onwards.

A number of milestones were achieved at the conference, even though Kenya and a number of other African countries expected more.

Firstly, member states agreed to close domestic markets of ivory, which had been fuelling elephant poaching in Africa. Even though a ban on international trade in ivory has been in place for many years, countries such as China and Japan allow trade in ivory pieces domestically.

Cites nations unanimously agreed that every country should take all the necessary legislative and regulatory measures to close their domestic markets as a matter of urgency. Vietnam, one of the biggest markets for ivory in early November 2016 destroyed more than two tons of confiscated elephant ivory and rhino horns, demonstrating its commitment to stop trade in wildlife trophies.

China, another major ivory market, followed suit in December 2016, and announced a complete ban on all ivory trade and processing activities by the end of 2017. Conservationists lauded China's move, terming it as a game changer for the future of elephants.

Another key milestone at the conference was the ending of a long-running discussion on a decision making mechanism that would have established a future trade in ivory. Members voted to put the matter off the table, dashing hopes of any future negotiations on sale of ivory. The decision-making mechanism or DMM was put in place nine years ago, as part of a compromise that put in place a nine-year moratorium on the international ivory trade. Namibia and several other countries agreed to the moratorium back then so long as a DMM was established.

State members also shot down a proposal by Namibia and Zimbabwe to lift the ban on trade in ivory. The two countries had proposed that their elephants be removed from CITES listing so they can sell their ivory without restrictions. Zimbabwe, in its proposal, argued that it needs to sell ivory to be able to fund conservation of its elephants. The nation wanted a green light to sell a 70-tonne ivory stockpile worth \$35 million, arguing that its elephant population was growing and often caused crop destruction.

Opponents of this proposal argued that any sale of ivory would stimulate demand.

"A proposal to sell ivory alone sends a signal to the markets and people start speculating. Prices of ivory jump and people start killing elephants and stocking ivory in anticipation of a future sale," Paula Kahumbu, the CEO of Wildlife Direct said in an interview with this writer.

Kahumbu added that allowing Namibia and Zimbabwe to sell ivory would have created problems because once you have a legal market, any ivory can be laundered into it.

"When you find an ivory in a shop, you won't know whether it is legal or illegal," she said.

The African Elephant Coalition (AEC), a consortium of 30 countries opposed Zimbabwe and Namibia's proposals and put forward its own proposal that would have toughened restrictions on trade in ivory.

The coalition wanted Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe's elephants moved



from Appendix II of CITES listing to Appendix I, the highest level of protection that guarantees zero trade in ivory. Appendix II listing allows these Southern African countries to propose a sale of ivory at any time. The coalition argued that these one-off sales trigger a demand for ivory leading to the killing of elephants in other parts of Africa.

This proposal was however rejected at the CITES conference, meaning the status quo for trade in ivory will be maintained beyond 2017 when the ban on international trade in ivory expires.

The EU delegation at CITES refused to vote for the proposal, defying a resolution by the European Parliament and ignoring wishes of hundreds of thousands of citizens who had signed an online petition calling for a total ban of ivory trade.

Proponents of the proposal criticised the EU delegation's decision saying it had wasted an opportunity to end trade in ivory once and for all.

"It is doubly saddening as the request was put forward by many of the African elephant range states from West and Central Africa as well as Kenya, so our snub to their request will send a message that yet again Europe 'knows best' in how to manage their resources," said Catherine Bearder, a member of the European Parliament, in an article on her website.

Delegates from the AEC countries were of course disappointed that their proposal did not go through but they hailed earlier decisions that blocked attempts to relax restrictions on ivory trade.

Some critics of the total ban proposal said it was a populist and simplistic solution to a complex problem and that it was not based on evidence. Duan Biggs, a Senior Research Fellow, Social-Ecological Systems & Resilience at Griffith University, Australia, said in an article that studies commissioned by CITES did not draw a direct connection between increase in poaching and one-off sales of ivory stockpiles. Instead, the studies cite other factors such as corruption, poverty and law enforcement capacity as the reasons behind increase in poaching.

Biggs wrote that holistic conservation approaches that are sustainable and based on evidence are what will save Africa's elephants.

Be that as it may, Kenyan conservationists say the conference achieved major milestones in terms of elephant protection and hope that the resolutions arrived at during the conference will translate to reduced elephant killings.

"It was one of the most successful Cites conferences we have had in recent years," Patricia Awori, an official at the African Elephant Coalition secretariat said in a phone interview.



Mitigating the menace

Colobus Conservation has been at the fore-front in addressing this problem through the engagement of the community and relevant stakeholders such as Kenya Power and Lighting Company. The group has proposed a number of measures that should be implemented by the power company so as to save primates from further electrocutions.

It proposes that all power lines and transformers within Diani area, especially those in hotspot areas, should be buried in the ground. All high voltage lines should also be insulated with PVC material and tree branches close to live power lines and transformers trimmed. The conservation group also suggests that colobridges should be installed so that primates and other arboreal species can move around freely without coming into contact with power lines.

As it is often the case when development and economic growth outweigh conservation, putting an end to the cruel electrocutions of primates will come at a significant cost, and to this extent, the work of Colobus Conservation is very admirable. But they need a lot of assistance and support.

The survival of these primate species is very crucial in the preservation and conservation of this unique biodiversity for future generations. It is our mandate as humans to protect this species and if we don't, then we have failed as a Nation.

On July 1, the Kenya Coast Tourism Association organised a dinner at Kaskazi Beach Hotel in conjunction with Kenya Power and Lighting Company. During the dinner, Colobus Conservation expressed their concerns on the increasing number of primate electrocutions in the area and suggested steps to mitigate such occurrences. The power company's regional manager for Coast assured the Organisation that a budget had been set aside for the acquisition of PVC insulated conductors and that the project would roll immediately.

This project will ensure that all transformers and naked electric cables around the area are insulated.

Saving Primates

Electrocutions a major problem for monkeys in Diani

Dr Dennis Bahati

In quite a few areas of our country, the power grid and infrastructure pose a serious danger to a number of wildlife species, especially arboreal creatures that either suffer tragic deaths or crippling injuries through electrocutions.

Electrocution is the major welfare issue facing primates here in Diani. It accounts for 36 per cent of the welfare cases reported annually. Of these, 90 per cent are fatal, with 10 per cent sustaining serious injuries. Those that survive electrocutions have close to zero chance of survival in the wild as a result of an amputated arm or leg.

Besides efforts to trim tree branches next to electric cable lines, a lot more needs to be done to ensure the continued survival of primates in Diani.

Sharp Rise in Reported Cases

Hundreds of electrocuted monkeys were reported at the Colobus Conservation between 2008 and 2015, which probably means that the number of annual cases is in the thousands.

The nationally endangered Angolan Colobus is more susceptible to electrocution due to its strict arboreal nature and for confusing

electric cable lines to tree branches as it traverses the forest canopies. This species is endemic in the area but its numbers have dwindled over the years and may be facing a near extinction scenario.

The problem can be described as a matter of exerting First World demands on a Third World country. The areas where the electrocutions are happening are outside our protected forest areas but which have developed very rapidly in the last few years. New real estate projects to accommodate the influx of new residents in former remote and desolate areas are going up as you read this.

In addition, the area is a booming tourist destination that further drives the development of luxurious hotels and holiday cottages. The escalation of commercial and real estate development, and the ongoing expansion of the electrical grid have intensified the problem.

Primates and other wildlife species are electrocuted when they form a circuit between parallel power lines, or when the branches and vines of the trees that form part of the monkeys' habitats grow out and touch a high voltage line or a transformer.



Monkeys and Gorillas; is there a difference?

By Animal Welfare Team

Monkeys and gorillas are mammals that are classified as primates. Gorillas are considered as the largest primates by physical size. Monkeys have a long tail that can be used to balance, while Gorillas do not have a tail.

There are more than 260 living species of monkeys, many of which are arboreal - meaning they reside in trees. Monkeys can range in size with the smallest being 4.6 inches with a 6.8 inches' tail, weighing 100 grams to 3.3 feet weighing 36 kilograms.

While, many of the monkeys are arboreal, there are species that reside on the ground in savannahs. Monkeys have small arms and long legs and opposable thumbs on both their hands and legs, and contrary to

popular belief, monkeys do not swing as their arms are weak. They are more prone to running on branches and climbing to the top of the treetops. They communicate via expressions, vocalizations and body movements. They show affection and make peace by grooming each other. Monkeys possess a smaller brain and have a diet of fruits, vegetables and small insects.

Gorillas are considered as the largest primate by physical size. The gorilla species are often considered as distant cousins to the humans and are believed to have the same ancestry origin. There are two dominant species of gorillas, with two sub-species each. Gorillas are bigger in size and have long and strong arms. The arms are often longer than the legs.

Gorillas move on their feet and knuckles, meaning they are quadrupeds but on many occasions, they can stand upright and walk bipedally for short distances when they are carrying food or are in defensive situations. Female gorillas are smaller compared to the male gorillas and usually weigh half the size of the male. Gorillas can weigh around 180 kilograms and can even go up to 270 kilograms in captivity.

The male gorillas are often known as silverbacks, because of their silver hair that extends from their back to their hips. The eastern gorilla is more darkly colored than the western gorilla, with the mountain gorilla being the darkest of all. Gorillas mostly live on the ground, with many creating nests on ground near trees.

Gorillas spend much of their day foraging, traveling and resting. Mountain gorillas mostly eat foliage, such as leaves, stems, pith, and shoots, while fruit makes up a very small part of their diets. Eastern lowland gorillas have a more diverse diet, made up of leaves, shoots, fruits and even insects such as termites.



Community members demonstrating against construction of standard gauge Railway through the Nairobi National park

Save Nairobi National Park Campaign

In September 2016, the government announced plans to route the standard gauge railway through the Nairobi National Park. The railway is expected to cut across a 6km stretch of the park on an 18-meter high bridge. Conservation organisations and communities living near the park have come to the fore to oppose this plan. The organisations have also rejected an environmental and social impact assessment report on which the decision to route the railway through the park is based. Here are some of their views.

We were not consulted during EIA process

By the Community

The environmental impact assessment study conducted to determine the suitable route for the standard gauge railway did not address our concerns as the Community residing in Empakasi, Oloosirkon, Kimuka, Kibiko, Nkoroï and Suswa. Our concerns are as follows:

1. The process was not open and transparent.
2. No prior information was provided to prepare for the so called public consultations.
3. There lacked no sufficient information regarding the date and venue for the alleged public consultations.
4. The notices were short, hence leading to low turnout.
5. The language of instruction/ discussion was English and Swahili while most the community is composed of illiterate and semi illiterate populace and no effort was made to translate the proceeding in an understandable language despite our requests.
6. Part of the session was facilitated by local area chiefs who were not objective and is on record for trashing any divergent views.
7. The consultants facilitating the so called public forums had a pre-determined agenda and what the output of the meetings was supposed to be - hence making them a one-sided affair and not consultative.
8. We, the residents, did not participate in any public hearing meeting on SGR II in 2016, as alleged and captured in the EIA report by Habitat Planners.
9. Arising from the above captioned concerns, therefore, we feel that as a community we were not adequately consulted. As a matter of fact, we learned about the SGR 2A project when the Chinese contractors invaded our land and started marking the routes without our prior consent.



SGR in the Park undermines commitment to Sustainable Development Goals

We, The Conservation Alliance of Kenya, are committed to ensure that infrastructure development in Kenya is underpinned by sound planning for the sustainability of the ecosystems upon which people and long-term economic growth depend. The preferred routing of the standard gauge railway through the Nairobi National Park is not in-keeping with several of Kenya's legal and policy commitments. Notably, the proposal is fundamentally misaligned with Kenya's protected area statutes which enshrine the sanctity and value of protected areas as an important and legitimate land use type.

The preferred routing also undermines Kenya's commitment to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is global agreement that one SDG cannot be achieved at the expense of another SDG – this cuts to the heart of integrated planning for sustainability. In this case, SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) would be achieved at the partial or full expense of SDGs 3, 4, 8, 11, 13, and 15 in Nairobi.

Kenya's capital city should provide a flagship and microcosm example of the effective implementation of the SDG 13, which aims to create sustainable cities and communities.

EIA Report does not capture True Impact

We have read the environmental impact assessment report for the proposed standard gauge railway from Nairobi South Railway Station to Enosupukia in Narok and wish to respond to issues raised in the EIA report as follows:

All the seven route options will affect the national park in one way or another

We feel route 1 and 7 that pass through the edge of the park are more appropriate choices.

The world famous Tsavo National Park has been intersected by the Kenya-Uganda railway throughout its history

The railway line in Tsavo passes through the border of Tsavo East and Tsavo West which are two parks. Moreover, Tsavos are big parks. We believe that Nairobi National Park cannot survive fragmentation that will be caused by the railway.

The railway overpasses the park on an 18-metre-high bridge and hence will have minimal impact on wildlife below

This will be a major intrusion into the park and a major aesthetic value degradation.

Railway workers will only be in the park for 18 months

It will be cumbersome to police all the human and vehicular traffic in the park for 18 months. We believe it would be easier if the railway passes at the edge but not across the park as proposed.

Route No. 4 is the only viable route

The EIA expert is already justifying the route through the park before analysing options outside the park. There was no consideration of any route that avoids the park. People are being herded like wildebeest to believe the railway must pass through the park and that there are no other options.



Lisa McCarthy on a trip to Antarctica

Lisa McCarthy

American vet reaching out across the world to animals in dire need of care

By Eunice Robai & Sebastian Mwanza

Growing up in a small town in Texas, USA, as an only child and surrounded by pets, Lisa McCarthy developed a deep desire to help and protect animals.

She felt a special sense of empathy and connection to the animals, a feeling that influenced her decision to take veterinary medicine as a career.

Her love for animals has seen her take veterinary medicine knowledge and services to many countries where such services are rare, from Mexico to Vietnam to Kenya. McCarthy's career has to a large extent focused on small animal medicine and she has spent many years of her career in animal shelters.

Now the founder of Vet Treks Foundation, McCarthy mobilises crews of skilled and passionate animal lovers and care givers to support animal welfare initiatives around the world.

McCarthy spoke to Animal Welfare Magazine about her life, career and future plans.

Why vet care?

It's been said that the meaning of life is to find your gift; and the purpose of life is to give it away. Among the choices I've made in my life, the decision to become a veterinarian turned out to be very fortunate. After almost 30 years of practice, I've never doubted that I found the profession that best suits my deep desire to aid and protect the most vulnerable creatures on earth.

Tell us about your first patient

My first "patient" was a fledgling sparrow that was ensnared in some threads within its nest when I was a child. Freeing it fortified my natural child's sense of empathy for small or defenseless creatures and I've never outgrown this feeling as an adult. A veterinary education gave me the gift of the knowledge I needed to help all of God's amazing creatures, and led me to discover my ultimate purpose, which is to share that knowledge in areas of the world where veterinary services are scarce.

What's your career focus?

For most of my career, I've practiced small animal medicine in general practice – everything from pediatrics to orthopedics to dentistry. I also spent many years of my career working within the shelter world – humane societies, rescue groups and such. I have donated many days to help animals in need where funds for veterinary care are limited. Surgery is my passion and I have seen some doozies! Occasionally, animals swallow foreign objects that cause an obstruction in their intestines, and require surgery to remove the objects and repair intestines. I once removed from the stomach of a dog two completely intact, inflated tennis balls, a pair of socks, and a watch that was still keeping time!

“

My view is that the ultimate solution is to support the efforts of local veterinary groups or individuals who can sustain the services needed for community animals, between visits from outside organisations.

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What inspired you to take vet care services outside United States of America?

I love travelling and discovering the world and I've been fortunate to visit many countries. In my travels I could not help but notice the lack of veterinary care for animals in many places, as well as lack of subsidised services that are available in the USA.

In so many areas, the population of dogs and cats is uncontrolled and these animals suffer needlessly from all manner of disease and starvation. They also pose significant public health threats to the human community such as zoonotic diseases, rabies being the most dangerous and notable.

So I became involved in projects that took vet care to other areas. For the past 15 years, I've travelled twice yearly to Mexico to work with a Colorado (USA) group that provides free spay/neuter services in areas of need.

By leading teams for these clinics, I became knowledgeable and skilled at organising the crews, equipment and medications needed to offer transient remote area services where veterinary care and spay/neuter services could be efficiently provided to high numbers of animals.

What's the most memorable moment in your career?

One of my favourite memories as a veterinarian happened at one of the Mexico clinics. A young man



Dr. Lisa teaching suturing technique to Vietnamese Vet student

brought in a puppy of a few months of age that had suffered severe trauma and infections in its eyes, causing them to be shriveled and damaged beyond repair.

The result was that the puppy was blind and in pain due to this condition and she shivered and cowered from the constant pain.

But the man loved this puppy and had even put ribbons on her ears because he wanted her to "feel pretty" in spite of her ailment. He wanted to save her and his love and devotion to the puppy really touched my heart.

We made the decision to remove her eyes to alleviate her pain.

Incidentally, blind dogs manage quite well; their other senses are very highly developed and they tend to learn their surroundings so well that often people cannot even tell they are blind.

The result of her surgery was miraculous! She was quickly pain free and suddenly acting like a puppy should, wagging her tail, playful and eating well.

When her loving owner came to pick her up, she knew him instantly from his voice and touch and she became ecstatic, licking his face and cuddling into his neck. It brought tears to my own eyes to witness such a bond.

This was just one of the many things I've seen in my career that remind me that every animal counts and though I may not be able to make life better for all of them, I can make a big difference for a few of them.

What challenges have you faced while providing vet care in developing countries?

The greatest challenge for me as a practicing veterinarian concerns the financial constraints of owners. This can be the cause of heartbreaking decisions for families who love their pets, as well as emotional hardship for veterinarians who must search for creative ways to provide solutions for these families. This is a problem even in the US, but there we have many "safety nets" in place for owners in need, including humane societies and many groups that provide subsidised or free care.

How did the idea of Veterinary Treks come about?

I realised that Mexico is well serviced by groups that provide free vet care, so I was compelled to take this knowledge to other areas.

Furthermore, as much good as these groups do, I noted that there was a big problem with the model of offering only intermittent services to underserved areas: it was not sustainable in the long run.

The population of animals, and the health problems they have, simply builds up again between visits from our well-meaning teams.

My view is that the ultimate solution is to support the efforts of local veterinary groups or individuals who can sustain the services needed for community animals, between visits from outside organisations.

This led me to create my non-profit organization, Vet Treks Foundation. The goals of Vet Treks Foundation are two-fold: to provide crews for assistance on projects of immediate urgent concern, and ultimately to provide training and financial support for the establishment of local veteri-



Dr. Lisa and Poppy her dog
in Colorado

nary businesses, so as to create the sustainability that is necessary for long term care of animals and the communities that live with them.

What achievements has Vet Treks made so far?

We have worked with the Humane Society of the Bahamas to provide remote spay/neuter services there and had an opportunity to teach current standards of care medicine in veterinary schools in Vietnam.

This past August, it was my pleasure to bring a crew of 18 veterinarians, veterinary technicians and other animal lovers to Kenya to support the important work of Africa Network for Animal Welfare in eradicating rabies in Kenya. With such a large group, we were able to crew many rabies vaccine stations in both Naivasha and in the Kasigau region, and over 3,000 animals were vaccinated.

With regard to sustainability, I was able to bring my knowledge of high volume spay/neuter operational efficiencies to Kenya and we conducted a very successful clinic in Naivasha, where more than 100 animals were safely sterilised.

With the involvement of several local professional stakeholders including ANAW, local veterinarians, students and the Kenya Society for the Protection and Care for Animals (KSPCA), we were able to provide education and training on how to stage high volume sterilisation clinics, with the ultimate goal that this will allow these groups to recreate similar clinics going forward.

What are your plans, looking to the future?

Going forward, I hope to continue to support ANAW in their admirable work to diminish the incidence of rabies, as well as to take sterilisation clinics to more communities in Kenya.

Meanwhile, we continue to search for sources of funding to support the establishment of vet services in all areas of need. My ultimate goal is that someday, Vet Treks Foundation will provide startup funds for talented and hardworking local veterinarians to open their own veterinary hospitals in areas of need.

As veterinarians, we must accept that the world is a big place and there will always be suffering animals that we cannot save. But for every individual animal that we help, we can make a lifetime of difference for that animal.

I am endlessly driven by the sentiment expressed by the 19th century writer, Charles Baudelaire: "And many times I have thought that somewhere, there may be a special paradise for the good dogs, the poor dogs, the dirty and lonely dogs, to reward so much courage, so much patience and labor."



Bird under Siege

Myths and superstitions put owls under threat

By Sebastian Mwanza

In June 2016, one Pastor Patrick Ngutu of Winners Chapel International, Nairobi, posted on social media an image of an owl that had been killed in the church's compound.

"The second owl witch that was killed today at Winners' Chapel International Nairobi... suffer not a witch to live...", read the photo's caption on the church's Facebook page.

The image sparked uproar on social media. People demanded that the

pastor be prosecuted for approving the killing of two owls. Some people said that the fact that the church deleted the Facebook post meant that it had realized that what it had done was wrong.

The owls are believed to have strayed from the Nairobi National Park, which is located less than a kilometer from the church. The Kenya Wildlife Service has vowed to sue the church. Killing of any wild animal is a criminal

offense that attracts a two-year jail term or a fine of Sh1 million.

In Africa, both traditional religious beliefs and Christianity stigmatise the owl as a bird of ill omen.

In Kenya, the screech of an owl is taken to mean that death will strike soon. In South Africa, many believe that when an owl lands on the roof and hoots, it has been sent by a witch doctor, to deliver a fatal curse. According to some African folklore, the owl is the embodiment of evil spirits that carry children at night.

Owl superstitions are not unique to Africa. Different cultures across the world associate owls with different things. The ancient Welsh associated owls with fertility. If a pregnant woman heard an owl hoot, then it was believed that she would have an easy

"The second owl witch that was killed today at Winners' Chapel International Nairobi... suffer not a witch to live...", read the photo's caption on the church's Facebook page.



labour. The Romans associated owls with the goddess Athena, wisdom, and prophecy. Ancient Christians saw owls as a sign of evil and linked them with Lilith, Adam's first, disobedient wife.

Some Native Americans regard the owl as an evil or bad omen while others see the owl as bestowers of supernatural knowledge and divination. In some Native American cultures, every person has an animal designation, which is determined by the time of year that one was born.

In this tradition, the owl is the animal symbol for people born between November 23 and December 21. People with an owl in their totem are said to be adaptable and approach life in an easy-going manner. They are

often artistic and adventurous and are seen to be witty and flexible, sensitive and with a zest for life. Conversely, they can get a bit self-absorbed and can hold grudges.

In the Indian culture, the owl was associated with good and its organs were considered to be medicine. Seizures in children could be treated with a broth made from owl eyes. Rheumatism pain was treated with a gel made from owl meat. Owl meat could also be eaten as a natural aphrodisiac.

In northern India, it was believed that if one ate the eyes of an owl, they would be able to see in the dark. In southern India, the cries of an owl were interpreted by number: One hoot was an omen of impending death; two meant success in anything that would

be started soon after; three represented a woman being married into the family; four indicated a disturbance; five denoted coming travel; six meant guests were on the way; seven was a sign of mental distress; eight foretold sudden death; and nine symbolized good fortune. In parts of the Indian sub-continent, people believed that the owl was married to the bat.

A number of researchers have conducted studies on owls with a view to debunk myths that threaten their existence.

Indian researchers, Suruchi Pande and Satish Pande authored the book, 'The Secret School of Owls' to remove the bad omen tag associated with the bird. The book depicts 26 species of owls which are commonly found in India.

Many initiatives have also come up around the world to demystify owls and protect them. EcoSolutions, a South African company uses the birds to control the rampant, and at times dangerous, rat populations in crowded townships.

The project also educates the public about the value of owls.

When residents refuse to allow the installation of nesting boxes for owlets taken from their ceilings, EcoSolutions rescues them to prevent them from being killed. The owls are placed in nesting boxes in township schools, which are deserted and peaceful at night.

School children are taught how to feed and care for the owls, in the hope that they will grow to understand owls and even become their protectors. Since the project began in 1998, about 84,000 children have been involved, feeding and caring for owls.

The National Zoological Gardens (NZG) of South Africa also runs programmes to educate children about owls.

The NZG organises the Annual Owl Week each year to teach learners about the role of owls within the ecosystem. Myths, superstitions and traditional stories around owls are unravelled at the event and learners are also made aware of threats facing owl populations.

Sources: LA Times, National Zoological Gardens website.



Ethical Practice

Why we need to avoid use of live animals in learning institutions

By Dr. Dennis Makau

While this appears to be an extreme idea, it would be highly mistaken to think it so. As a matter of fact, it would be unfair to disagree with it before getting to see the macro-picture of the current training approaches in Kenya and Africa at large.

It was in October, 2007, when I was first introduced to my anatomy class in vet school. One of the adjunct subjects of the day was a topic in physiology that deals with lab animal restraint, sampling, and euthanasia.

The instructor called the class of 120 ambitious young men and women who looked forward to graduating as veterinary doctors. Shortly afterwards, the newest members of our class were introduced: two lab mice in a cage.

From the look of it, the mice appeared at peace but, today from an experienced eye, the amount of stress was unimaginable. Anyways, to cut the long story short, after a brief introduction to different restraint methods, the ultimate euthanasia approach was cervical dislocation and decapitation. There was dead silence when the instructor asked whether there was anyone willing to volunteer to euthanise the poor mice. After serious deliberations and hesitations, one of my classmates mastered the courage and 'euthanised' the animals.

I say this in quotes because in no ordinary situation can an inexperienced hand adequately euthanise an animal by cervical dislocation and do it in a painless manner. This image stuck

with many of my classmates throughout vet school and this incident may have contributed to losing about 40 per cent of the class by the second year of vet school. This is just one of the many incidents throughout vet school where demonstrations and experiments were carried out using animals.

I do not downplay the need to have hands-on experience during training of veterinary professionals or other animal science-related professions. However, I take issue with two things in this setup. One, in the story told earlier, a class of 120 students is bundled around a small lab table to watch one instructor demonstrating handling procedures on two lab mice. Does something sound wrong with this picture? How effective is the



Professor Fawzy Elnady demonstrates how alternatives work at Egerton University

training supposed to be? How much hands-on experience is this expected to achieve? The answer is less than 10 per cent of the students actually get the intended knowledge at that setting, which is similar to what happens in most of our teaching institutions (primary, secondary, colleges and universities).

Well, the solution is simple: why not just have more animals to play around with in the name of learning? While that sounds like a rosy idea, it would not only be extremely expensive and economically unwise to maintain these animals but also ethically inappropriate to slaughter animals en-masse under the guise of learning.

Secondly, once these animals are used for a one-off experiment, they are oftenly euthanised. This is because some of the procedures carried out on these animals are invasive and

thus the lab animals cannot continue to thrive post the trauma inflicted on them. Every normal human being who has ever suffered an ailment knows fully well how bad a small wound or ache can feel. Now, to imagine inflicting that much pain on a helpless animal in the name of passing knowledge, and yet not achieving the expected knowledge transfer means that there is definitely something wrong with this approach.

Basic arithmetic and reason dictate that an additive or synergistic process must always have a positive end result. From the look of things, this approach doesn't adhere to this basic rule of life. Sticking to our old ways of doing things while the rest of the world is miles ahead in using alternative methods of training with the help of technology is somewhat perturbing.

Even more eerie is the argument that we do not know the efficacy of these new methods, while tonnes of research exists showing how more effective these alternative methods are compared to the old ways. It's not a question of whether or not something is broken and whether we should fix it. It's a realisation that fixing our education system as far as animal use is concerned is long overdue.

The current system is faulty and needs a major overhaul. This can only be effected by the largest consumer of the workforce generated by these training processes and institutions – the government.

The best approach thus remains a rigorous reform of the curriculum in learning institutions and policy reforms to replace live animals with alternatives for teaching and examination processes.



Addressing Human-Wildlife Conflict in Africa

By Sebastian Mwanza

One morning in March 2016, people living in areas close to the Nairobi National Park woke up to news that a pride of lions was roaming in their neighbourhood.

The news stirred both excitement and fear. Kenyans, in their characteristic manner, took to social media to share jokes about the lions. "Commuting to Lang'ata is now considered a game drive, people should pay more," tweeted one fellow.

Lost in the jokes was the all-important question on why the lions had strayed from the park. The incident presented a perfect opportunity for a discussion on how the growing human population is impacting on wildlife habitats in the city. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

Human-wildlife conflicts have become more frequent and severe over recent decades because of human population growth, infrastructure development and expansion of agricultural and industrial activities.

Moreover, the effects of climate change are exacerbating these conflicts. In times of progressive loss and degradation of natural habitats and biodiversity, wildlife populations are declining in many areas where human-wildlife conflicts occur.

So, when do we have human-wildlife conflict?

Human-wildlife conflict occurs

when wildlife requirements encroach on those of human populations, with costs both to residents and wild animals, according to the 2003 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Parks Congress.

The problem exists in one form or another all over the world. Conflict between humans and crocodiles, for example, has been reported in 33 countries spanning the tropics and subtropics, and the problem probably exists in many more.

This article focuses on Africa, where human-wildlife conflict is particularly prevalent, even in countries with a higher average annual income. Crocodiles still kill people in the Lake Nasser area in Egypt and within towns in Mozambique; leopards still kill sheep within 100 km of Cape Town, South Africa, and lions kill cattle around the outskirts of Nairobi.

A set of global trends relating to human populations, habitat evolution and animal distribution and behaviour has contributed to the escalation of human-wildlife conflict in Africa.

Human development is one of the main causes. Competition between growing human populations and wildlife for the same living spaces and resources brings about the conflict. Negative perceptions about wild animals, especially in protected areas where the presence of wildlife populations inflicts daily costs on local communities, exacerbate conflict and undermines conservation efforts.

Natural factors, such as droughts, bush fires, climatic changes and other unpredictable natural hazards also contribute to a decrease in suitable wildlife habitat and therefore affect the occurrence of human-wildlife conflicts.

History of human-wildlife conflict

Human-wildlife conflict has existed for as long as humans and animals have shared a landscape. Fossil records show that the first hominids fell prey to the animals with which they shared their habitats and shelters.

Forensic evidence has recently demonstrated that the "Taung skull", perhaps the most famous hominid fossil, which was discovered in South Africa in 1924, belonged to a child who was killed by an eagle two million years ago.

Crocodiles have an ancient lineage dating back to the Mesozoic era, and have remained functionally unchanged for longer than the human species has been in existence. It is likely that crocodiles have attacked and eaten humans and their predecessors in Africa over the last four million years. Further, Egyptian historical records reveal that in 2000 BC, hippopotamuses in the Nile delta in Egypt fed on cultivated crops while crocodiles ate livestock and occasionally humans. It is no coincidence that the Egyptian god of evil was depicted as the crocodile-headed deity Sobek.

Forms of human-wildlife conflict

Crop damage is the most

prevalent form of human-wildlife conflict across the African continent. The occurrence and frequency of crop-raiding is dependent upon a multitude of conditions such as the availability, variability and type of food sources in the area, the level of human activity on a farm, and the type and maturation time of crops as compared to natural food sources.

A wide variety of vertebrates conflict with farming activities in Africa. These include birds, rodents, primates, antelopes, buffalos, hippopotamuses, bush pigs and elephants. While it is widely recognized that in most cases elephants do not inflict the most damage to subsistence agriculture, they are generally identified as the greatest threat to African farmers. Elephants can destroy a field in a single night raid.

Another adverse form of the human-wildlife conflict is the killing of domestic animals by predators. In the savannah and grasslands where pastoralism remains the main source of livelihood for many people, attacks on livestock are an issue.

Preventing and mitigating human-wildlife conflict

Human-wildlife conflict can be managed through a variety of approaches. The aim is either to prevent the occurrence of conflict or to reduce the level of impact and lessen the problem.

Awareness raising is one way to prevent human-wildlife conflict. This can be carried out in the community at different levels, e.g., in schools or in adult education arenas such as farmer field schools. Over time, it could result in a change of attitudes and behaviour among local populations and contribute to reduced risks for animals.

The payment of compensation when a human death occurs or when livestock is killed by a predator, also helps to increase damage tolerance levels among the affected communities and prevents them from taking action such as killing the predators involved.

Vigilance is an important component of crop or livestock protection and human-wildlife conflict

management. The fear of humans normally dissuades animals from committing damage.

In cases where there are not enough herders to protect animals from predators, guard animals such as dogs are a good alternative. To be successful, a guard animal must bond with the animals they are to guard. This bonding, combined with the guard animal's natural aggression toward predators, can make a guard animal an effective protector.

Fences can be absolutely effective in preventing conflict between people and wild animals if they are properly designed, constructed and maintained. Fenced wildlife sanctuaries enable people to benefit yet be separated from wildlife, so they can practice other land uses such as pastoralism and agriculture.

Good example; Lion lights in Kenya

For the pastoralists and Maasai tribes around the iconic Nairobi National Park, a lion sighting is usually bad news; valuable livestock are often lost to lions looking for easy prey, prompting rural communities to take matters into their own hands.

A local Maasai youth, Richard Turere, 14, living in Kitengela, Kajiado County which is approximately 32 kilometers south of capital Nairobi and bordering Nairobi National Park, having grown up as a herder, has invented a home grown, simple, affordable and effective solution to protecting his family's cattle.

Recognizing that moving lights scared lions, Turere has developed a system of 10 to 20 battery powered flashing lights attached to the fencing protecting the cattle at night. These lion lights have resulted in no loss of cattle and no lion attacks since being installed in over 25 "bomas" in Kitengela. Further, these "Lion Light" systems have also been rigged up around the wildlife dispersal areas.

These "Lion Lights" have been fine-tuned and scaled up, and are being used in various parts of Kenya. Ewaso Lions currently uses five Lion Lights in two different areas, and so far they have been 100% successful in keeping livestock safe from lions. And by preventing lions from attacking livestock in the first place, this

eliminates the incentive for people to kill lions in retaliation.

Lion attacks on livestock have also been escalating south of Buffalo Springs National Reserve in an area called Ngare Mara. With the long wet season, prey had dispersed out of the Reserve, so the resident lion pride turned to easier prey: livestock in Ngare Mara.

When people were threatening to retaliate, and kill lions, the locals decided this would be a good place to try the Lion Lights. Michael Mbithi from Green Rural African Development (GRAD), was quickly called to the area and installed three units. Since the installation of the lights, there have been no more attacks in the Ngare Mara area hence a revamped human-wildlife coexistence.

Conclusion

Considering the current human population growth rate, the increasing demand for natural resources and the growing pressure for access to land, it is clear that the human-wildlife conflict will not be eradicated in the near future.

On the contrary, it will continue to grow as African economies continue to be driven by the production of resources for supply to more industrialized nations.

The most sensible approach in addressing human-wildlife conflict is to implement a combination of short-term mitigation tools alongside long-term preventive strategies. In this way, immediate problems are addressed while the rapid development of innovative approaches is fostered to address future issues and eradicate the problem in the long term.

It is of paramount importance that an international forum be set up to promote information sharing on human-wildlife conflict issues and that a web-based portal be developed to provide conflict databases, remediation technologies, good management practices, and innovative solutions and their outcomes.

The portal should also provide educational material, information on high-risk areas and links to other relevant and useful web sites such as those of the IUCN and World Wildlife Fund.

Pictorial



Tethering Animals

New method to save donkeys from pain and injury

By Dr. Janet Muthusi



Tying ropes around donkeys' fore limbs to control and restrain them is a common practice among donkey owners.

This is done to prevent them from roaming into insecure areas, trespassing other people's property and keep them from any other potentially risky situation.

However, many donkey owners and users do not have sufficient information on how to appropriately tether their donkeys without causing pain or injury.

Donkey owners mostly use nylon ropes to tether their donkeys as they consider them to be strong and more durable. This causes wounds on the animal as the nylon ropes are made of coarse material which is tied too tight.

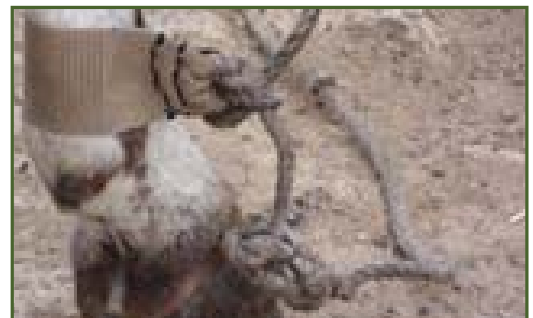
To address this problem, the Kenya Veterinary Association has developed an alternative to tethering using nylon ropes to reduce the intensity and occurrence of wounds on donkeys.

The alternative technique involves a wide manila rope which is cut into portions and then each rope is carefully and permanently fitted manually around one fore limb using a strong thread and needle.

The rope is checked to ensure that it is not too tight or too loose by fitting fingers between the rope and the donkey's limb. A small loop is left to pass the nylon ropes without causing any injury to the donkey's limb.

As more donkey owners and users are trained on how to use this technique, it is expected that this will reduce the occurrence of wounds caused by inappropriate tethering methods.

Brooke East Africa continues to work with the Kenya Veterinary Association, one of its partners in the donkey welfare project in Kajiado County, to train donkey owners and users on the best methods to reduce the harm caused by poor tethering practices.





Saving the Vultures

Nature's clean-up crew on the verge of extinction

By Eunice Robai

They are well known as nature's best cleaners but the rate at which they are declining is alarming.

Vultures are birds of prey that belong to the same family as hawks and eagles.

They are however special in that they mainly feed on carrion, seldom ever killing live prey. They are indeed majestic and magnificent feathered scavengers. Vultures are easy to spot, with their characteristic bare head and neck, which keeps them clean during and after feeding. They are heavily built, with massive wings, claws and a sturdy beak.

Regrettably, vultures are very infamous; a narrative we hope will change in the near future because it's simply unfitting.

They have earned these colloquial titles, "The sentinels in our skies" and "The nature's clean-up crew" which

they unreservedly deserve. By feeding on carrion, they captivantly perform the priceless clean-up ecosystem service that has unfortunately earned them all sorts of evil names out of sheer ignorance.

Vulture numbers on the decline

The Mara-Serengeti ecosystem is known to be a hotspot for vultures due to the wildebeest migration, which provides considerable food for scavengers, with vultures consuming almost 70 per cent of the available meat. But little is known about the status of scavenging raptors in this important ecosystem or in East Africa in general.

They usually breed on small but dense flat-topped acacias or Balanites and compete with Secretary Birds. One of the world's largest flying birds is now on the brink of extinction, according to the latest IUCN Red List

for birds, released by BirdLife.

The Red List now includes 1,253 bird species in the threatened categories of vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered – 12 per cent of the world's birds. The declines are severe enough that six of the eight species of the vulture should likely have their conservation status raised from "vulnerable" or "endangered" to "critically endangered".

Much as we may not know, vultures provide valuable services to our environment. They feed on carcasses of dead animals and by so doing cleaning the environment. A vulture can feed on more than two pounds of meat in a minute; a sizable crowd can strip a zebra – nose to tail – in 30 minutes. Without vultures, reeking carcasses would likely linger longer, insect populations would boom, and diseases such as rabies would spread – to people, livestock,



and other wild animals causing numerous negative impacts.

Partners in anti-poaching war

The hovering above every dead animal during the cleaning party in the parks helps one to locate dead or lost animals as well as identifying any poaching activity. Vultures have a keen eyesight and distinctive vantage point that can locate an elephant carcass within 30 minutes of the animal's death.

In some African cultures, vultures are increasingly targeted for their heads, which are widely used in traditional medicine. It is alleged that trade in vulture parts, especially their heads, which are valued as fetishes is worsening the problem.



It can take 45 to 70 minutes for the most-skilled poachers to hack off two elephant tusks, and when vultures gather overhead, rangers can get that much closer to apprehending the poachers.

They also help in controlling the number of pests such as rats and feral dogs by reducing their food availability.

Trade in vulture parts

In some African cultures, vultures are increasingly targeted for their heads, which are widely used in traditional medicine. It is alleged that trade in vulture parts, especially their heads, which are valued as fetishes is worsening the problem.

Businessmen sometimes sprinkle a powder of vulture parts around their businesses to improve profits. These powders can also be blown into the air to recall a lost lover. This trade, especially in West African countries, South Africa and Tanzania, has led to an increase in vulture killings, though it is difficult to come up with a hard number. In particular, the demand for vulture parts in Nigeria is pushing many species of the bird toward extinction there.

"Vultures silently suffer a myriad of threats," says Dr Kariuki Ndang'ang'a of Birdlife International. "Highly ranking among them is poisoning, which accounts for over 61 per cent of vulture deaths."

Poisoning has two sides to it. One, it occurs when poachers intentionally lace their cache with poison with a purpose to kill vultures to reduce chances of detection by rangers when vultures circle around the kill.

Secondly, it occurs during human-predators conflict. In retaliatory attempts, farmers lace carcasses with poison and unintentionally kill vultures in masses.

Vultures also die after eating toxic pesticide-laced carcasses intended to kill predators such as hyenas, jackals and lions, or to control wild dog populations.

Human-wildlife conflict

As the world develops, so do vultures' problems increase. A study done in 2010 shows that the ecosystems in Kenya are being dramatically changed by human activities resulting in massive impacts on biodiversity. New infrastructure like power lines presents myriad hazardous obstacles for vultures during flight. Meanwhile, agricultural expansion is pushing ungulates out of vulture territory, reducing the amount of carrion available to these scavengers.

There are eleven species of vultures found in Kenya. The most common ones include the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), hooded vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) and white-headed vulture (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*).

There is also the Ruppell's vulture (*Gyps rueppellii*), popularly found in Kenya's Hell's Gate National Park, and the white-backed vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), found in nearly all Kenyan national parks. Each species is different from the other by flying abilities, energy use, nesting behaviour and how they eat to avoid competition. They are social and seldom forage alone. They forage successfully as a group.

In a day, vultures can traverse a number of parks across the country. They can overfly the Nairobi National Park if required, in minutes on their way to Kapiti, Tsavo, Amboseli, Kedong, Mara or the Serengeti.

Vulture conservation awareness programmes

Vultures have received considerable attention of late, due in part to the furor over the demise of Indian Vultures, with the Kenya Raptor Working Group and the Peregrine Fund hosting such events as the International Vulture Awareness Day, and vulture conservation awareness programmes.

"People need to be aware of the good services vultures provide to them and participate in tackling the troubles faced by vultures," said Dr Njoroge of the National Museums of Kenya.

There is still need for the protection of vultures, bearing in mind their important role in the ecosystems where they live.

It is time for all of us to accept our role in protecting what is around us wherever we are, for the sanctity of some distant place. Each nest needs to be logged and their breeding well recorded. It is time to devote more effort and money to saving Africa's vultures.

Meet Shivani Bhalla; the Defender of Samburu Lions



By Sebastian Mwanza

A recent wildlife crimes workshop at Shaba Sarova Lodge, in Samburu, Northern Kenya, brought together a number of professionals with rising passions, all geared towards saving the last of our African wild through strategic and skilled prosecution of wildlife crimes.

Magistrates, prosecutors, Kenya Wildlife Service officials, Directorate of Criminal Investigations Officers, conservationists and other stakeholders attended the workshop.

One of the personalities whose

presence at the workshop made a landmark impression and stirred enthusiasm, and whose story will inspire and be told for many generations to come, was Shivani Bhalla of Ewaso Lions.

I got an opportunity to speak to her on the sidelines of the workshop and what left me absolutely awed was how she ventured into the risky yet self-rewarding job of saving our Northern Kenya lions.

Her moving chronicle

As a gregarious girl of eight,

Bhalla's parents took her on a safari to the Samburu National Reserve. What happened there was going to be transformational. And it did change her life.

While on a game drive at the park, Bhalla spotted a cheetah. The wild cat fascinated her so much that she took photos, which she has kept to this day. By the end of the safari, Bhalla had made up her mind what she wanted to do when she grew up.

"I told my parents that I wanted to do something in the wild," Bhalla says. "I wanted to follow cheetahs and other animals and make sure they were safe. My parents thought I would be a vet. But I am too soft. If an animal dies I will start crying. I told them that I couldn't be a vet but they should allow me to be a ranger. That dream horrified and scared them in equal measure."

Bhalla finally decided to delve on matters conservation. She enrolled for a degree in environmental science and another one in wildlife conservation at a UK university.

Bhalla's conservation journey starts

Upon completion of her studies, she came back to Kenya and worked with the Kenya Wildlife Service for one year and Save the Elephants for seven years before she left to start Ewaso Lions almost ten years ago.

The idea to start the project came about when she was doing her Masters thesis in the Samburu National Reserve.

"I looked at the lions for my thesis and it brought a lot of questions," she says. "One of the prominent questions was when the lions leave the park, where are they going and what is happening to them."

Bhalla did a study to understand lion conservation and she realised the importance of engaging local communities in conservation efforts.

The Samburu warriors she works with to protect lions in the region are a daily inspiration for her, she says.

"They are very passionate and



dedicated,” Bhalla says. “These guys risk their lives to save the lions every single day. Two years ago, Jeneria [one of the morans] stood between a lion and two elders and he told them they cannot kill it.”

Death of a lion is a big blow to her

Her job has its own share of ups and downs, though. Bhalla says one of the most devastating moments in her life was when she and her team found a lion they had been looking for killed and burnt to ashes. Loirish, the lion had been missing for some time and Bhalla and her team set out to find him.

While they were tracking him, they heard gun shots and quickly went to fetch Conservancy and KWS rangers, who were about 5km away.

“By the time we got there, it was too late,” Bhalla says. “A lot of things went through my mind as his ashes tumbled below my dusty feet. The first feeling was that of complete disbelief that the lion had been killed. I could not believe that this famous lion had been shot.”

Bhalla later realised that the lion had caused a lot of trouble in the community by killing many camels and there was no way the community could have spared it. The reaction of some members of the community to

the lion’s killing, however, encouraged her.

“They came from the entire community to pay tribute, saying they were sorry that the lion had been killed,” she says. “They spoke about the lion as if he was a human being. That showed me how the community had accepted that the lion was important in their lives. You’ll never find a Samburu apologising to another Samburu for the loss of a lion – that was a landmark scenario.”

The killing of yet another lion in May 2009 cast another dark shadow in her career. The lion, who had four cubs, was shot in the head and Bhalla and her team spent two days looking for her cubs.

“They were hiding in the bushes waiting for their mother, who would never come back because she was dead,” Bhalla says. “They finally came out of the bushes after another two days and came to the river to drink water. Watching them and knowing that they were not going to see their mother again, and that they were just looking for a way to survive by themselves really affected me.”

Trouble in the North

Tribal clashes in the region sometimes threaten to distract Bhalla from wildlife conservation. Communities living in the area – the Samburu,

Turkana and the Borana – fight each other often.

“One can easily be caught in the web of that infighting and lose focus of saving the lions,” she says. “There are also a lot of guns everywhere and that threatens even the warriors.”

Encroachment of wildlife habitat as the human population grows and the development of infrastructure in the north is another major cause of concern for Bhalla. Land meant for wildlife is shrinking every day and a region that has remained undisturbed for ages is now being opened up for expropriation.

“When all these developments happen, you take away what actually works in northern Kenya because it is the only unfenced ecosystem where people and animals are living together. We need to keep northern Kenya the way it is.”

Bhalla urges Kenyans to take up the responsibility of protecting wildlife. Many wildlife species have become extinct and Kenyans must protect whatever is remaining as a matter of urgency, she says.

“We are so lucky to have these animals and it is our responsibility to secure and safeguard the future of our animals,” she says. “Why are we waiting for other people to come and do it for us? Let’s get on with it before time runs out.”

Animal Welfare Local News

Hyena mauls 50 sheep and goats in Narok

A pastoralist in Narok South incurred Sh400, 000 in losses after a hyena killed over 50 sheep and goats.

Parwat ole Kool and his son Michael Kool are staring at starvation after the livestock, which is their only source of livelihood, were killed by the wild animal which had been wreaking havoc in Maji Moto village.

"It was around 2am at night when we heard the goats bleat fiercely. We came out but unfortunately when we entered the sheep pen, we were shocked to see carcasses strewn all over. We are at a big loss," Kool said.

He said they had a total of 100 sheep and goats, adding that the family of 17 depended on the livestock for food and income.

— The Standard, Nov, 2016

KWS in efforts to rehabilitate rescued hyenas

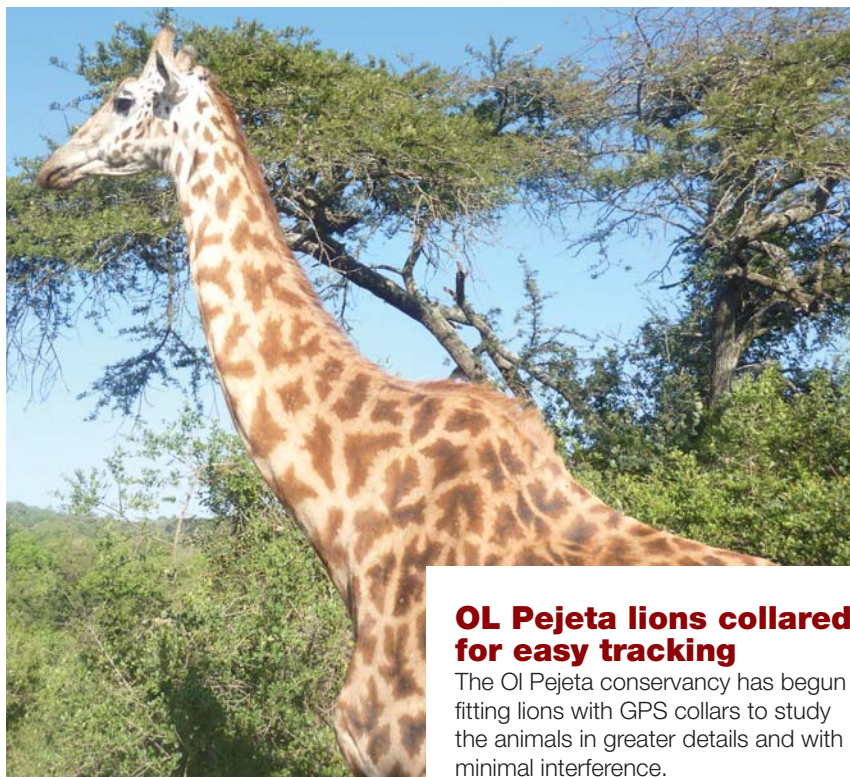
The Kenya Wildlife Service in conjunction with Born Free Foundation have begun the process of rehabilitating two stripped hyena cubs rescued in Kangeta area, 45 kilometres from Meru National Park in April 2016

— KWS, Nov 2016

Amboseli Jumbos collared in efforts to study migratory patterns



The Kenya Wildlife Service is in the process of collaring elephants at the Amboseli National Park. The exercise, which started in 2012, is geared towards better understanding of the migratory routes of jumbos in order to give concrete data about their migratory patterns. This exercise has been made necessary due to the ever increasing human population in the



country leading to the encroachment on jumbo's migratory routes.

The process was led by the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources Judi Wakhungu who was accompanied by the PS for Natural Resources Dr Margaret Mwakima, KWS Director General Kitili Mbathi among others.

During the exercise, one young male elephant was successfully collared by the team of vets from the KWS. This was the second elephant to be collared.

— Ministry of Environment, Oct, 2016

Elephant killed in road crash

An elephant died after it was hit by a lorry on the Mombasa-Nairobi highway.

Kenya Wildlife Service received the report of the accident at around 4.am on Friday, November 18 and dispatched a team to the scene.

Unfortunately, the elephant, an adult female, had already died by the time the team arrived at the scene.

— KWS, Nov 2016

OL Pejeta lions collared for easy tracking

The Ol Pejeta conservancy has begun fitting lions with GPS collars to study the animals in greater details and with minimal interference.

The lions are tranquilized before they are fitted with the tracking collars.

The GPS data then allows the rangers to gather information on the exact location of the animals and determine potential kill sites for lion prides.

"We do this to be able to track the movements of animals, see how they interact with one another and how they separate. But we also do it to create a database that helps us better manage the actions of the animal," said Bernard Chira, an employee at the conservancy.

According to Kenyan authorities, the lion population in the country faces the risk of declining every year, due to conflict with humans and the destruction of their natural habitat.

"We also take blood samples to better understand what is happening within this population, and see if there are diseases which we should worry about," said Mathew Mutinda, a veterinary officer.

This technology helped locate Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe, and made it possible for the rangers to trace his last movements.

— AFP, August, 2016

Vietnam destroys ivory stockpile



Vietnam destroyed a large stockpile of elephant ivory and rhino horns in November, in attempts to deter illegal wildlife trafficking.

Conservation organisations lauded the move, saying it demonstrated Vietnam's commitment to close domestic ivory markets. The country is among the world's biggest ivory markets.

The seized horns, worth more than \$7 million on the black market, came from 330 African elephants and 23 rhinos slaughtered by poachers.

The ivory would have been mainly used in jewellery or home decorations, and the rhino horns were destined to be made into an alternative 'medicine' believed in some societies to cure cancer.

John Scanlon, secretary-general of the Convention on International Trade

in Endangered Species in Wild Fauna and Flora, said in a statement that the age and origin of the trafficked goods could now be identified through forensics, making prosecution and conviction easier.

"As a result of global collective efforts ... trading in illegal ivory and rhino horn is shifting from low risk, high profit to high risk," he said.

Ha Cong Tuan, Vietnam's vice minister of agriculture and rural development, said: "By organising today's destruction, Vietnam would like to affirm once again that the Vietnamese government is highly determined in implementing laws, international conventions and fighting law violations. It is also a message to those who are thinking of using or trading wildlife products for profit that

they must stop; otherwise, they will be severely punished."

Comedian and actor Stephan Fry said illegal poaching was as much a domestic issue as it is an international problem, and asked his followers on Twitter to sign a petition to end the illegal trade in the UK.

The petition states: "The Conservatives pledged to shut down the UK's domestic ivory market in their manifesto for the past two elections. 30,000 African Elephants are slaughtered a year for their tusks, yet the government has still not outlawed the trade. From 2009 to 2014, 40% of UK customs seizures were ivory items."

— **International Business Times, Nov 2016**

Animal Welfare through Schools

By Eunice Robai



Dr. Maryanne Kagai interacts with Kamuiru Primary school pupils

“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see,” said John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States of America. It is a message that rhymes well with the work of the animal welfare clubs in Kenyan schools.

The clubs target primary school children between the ages of six and 14 and aim to increase knowledge of animal welfare issues, develop empathy and positive attitudes towards animals and engender patterns of responsible behaviour.

The Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) launched the clubs in 2012 and the number of schools under the program has grown to over 33 schools across four counties. Vivian Wanjiru, a pupil at Mutuini Primary School in Nairobi County, is a member of the animal welfare club. Wanjiru says the club has helped increase her knowledge about animals.

“We have really learnt a lot from the clubs,” Wanjiru says. Her sentiments are echoed by club members from different schools. “We

have learnt about animal's needs and their behaviours too,” says Kasyoki Muthoka, a pupil at Malili Primary School.

Teachers in schools where animal welfare clubs are operating say children's change of attitude towards animals is evident. “In the past, stray animals were chased away the moment they were spotted. But now the story is different. The children are taking good care of animals whether they know their owners or not. They are really demonstrating what they are learning,” says Patrick Kahiu, the patron of Gacharage Primary School in Kiambu County.

Leah Tinkoine, a patron at Moipei Primary School, says animal welfare lessons are enjoyable for both teachers and learners because of the activities involved. “It is evident that the learners are having a lot of fun through the interactions with animals, going out and just bonding,” Leah says.

From time immemorial, people have held various myths about animals. The clubs are helping demystify these myths by imparting the right knowledge on animals to children.

Children hold weekly sessions in the animal welfare clubs and share the knowledge they acquire with their families and communities living around their schools. All schools under the program have patrons who have been trained to teach animal welfare issues. The patrons are provided with a teaching manual while each learner has an activity book with lessons that they participate in every week.

The ANAW team visits the schools every month to assess the impact of the teaching materials provided to the animal welfare clubs. It also holds patrons' workshops in partnership with the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad to promote information sharing, learning and networking.

Working with other stakeholders within the Animal Welfare Action Kenya, ANAW also continues to push for the integration of animal welfare in the Kenya school curriculum.



Left: Natali holding her best friend, Nimo. Right: Natali and her mom Lyn Mukabi

Kids and Pets

Dogs are my greatest friends

By Eunice Robai

Natalie Okila, 12, had always wanted to have a pet. One day, as she was walking around her neighbourhood with her dad, who is now late, she saw a beautiful dog and asked her dad to buy it for her.

The dog, Nimo, is now her constant companion at home.

"I called her Nimo because that was her original name," says Natalie as she tries to calm down the dog, which is jumping up and down and running around excitedly. Nimo is not the only dog in the house. Her companions are Gorks and Spaky who

also greet us by jumping up and down as we enter the house.

"I am fond of pets," Natalie says. "I love my dogs. They are good to be around. They are smart and active too. They accompany me when I go out for a walk. Every time I come from school, they begin to wag their tails. Nimo likes to lick my feet."

Natalie's pets are trained and do respond whenever their names are called out. "Gorks is very sensitive to sound. At the slightest sound, he gets startled and begins to bark," she says.

Natalie takes good

care of her pets. She cleans them, grooms them regularly, and ensures they have clean drinking water.

"Occasionally I give them meat and bones, too. They are treated as members of our family," she says.

Natalie's brother, Alexis, takes time to play with the

"I love my dogs. They are good to be around. They are smart and active too. They accompany me when I go out for a walk. Every time I come from school, they begin to wag their tails. Nimo likes to lick my feet."

dogs too. The last born in the family seems to enjoy it every time the dogs run after cats or bark at strangers and other dogs.

Research shows that children who grow up in homes with pets are likely to develop positively. Tasks such as walking the dog teach children to be responsible and give them a sense of achievement.

Pets offer comfort and companionship to kids. No matter what mood they are in, children find support and security from their animal companion, which often means they are less anxious or withdrawn. They also help to build family bonds.

Titbits

Turtles can breathe through their butts



Yes, some species of aquatic turtles can breathe through their butts. This is much more about oxygen absorption across tissues, and less like breathing through a snorkel or nose. Turtles poop, pee, mate, and lay eggs through one hole, technically called a cloaca or vent.

Sacs next to the cloaca, called bursa, easily expand. The walls of these sacs are lined with blood vessels. Oxygen diffuses through the blood vessels, and the sacs are squeezed out. The entire procedure uses little energy for a turtle that doesn't have a lot to spare. Dignity has to play second-fiddle to survival sometimes.

Squirrels will adopt other squirrels' babies if they are abandoned



Squirrels will take in orphaned pups if the babies are closely related to the adoptive mother.

Although adoptions occur among species that live in extended family groups, it's much less common among social animals, such as squirrels, which are territorial, live alone and rarely interact with one another. Squirrels are able to assess which pups they are related to before determining whether to adopt.

Cows' motherly instincts



Cows are devoted mothers and have been known to walk for miles to find their calves. Cows have almost 360-degree panoramic vision. They also have an excellent sense of smell and are able to detect odours five to six miles away. They can also hear both high and low frequency sounds beyond human capability.

Pigs love tummy rubs



A mother pig "sings" to her piglet while nursing. Newborn piglets learn to run to their mothers' voices and to recognize their

own names. Pigs also love tummy rubs.

Chickens have complex language skills



Baby spotted hyenas, called cubs, Chickens have a complex language all of their own, with over 30 different types of alarm calls depending on the type of threat. They also have great memories and can differentiate between over 100 different faces (of their fellow chickens).

A mother hen and her chicks begin communicating even before the chicks hatch out of their eggs. The hens talk to their eggs, including purring and other sounds, which can help the chicks recognize their mother's voice after they hatch. Chicks also begin to cheep inside their eggshells after about 19-20 days of incubation. The mother hen will not leave the nest from the time she hears her chicks' first cheeps until they are hatched.

Mice can survive anywhere



Mice are remarkably adaptable to almost any

environment, making them one of the most successful mammals living on earth today.

Mice in the wild are nature's architects; building intricate burrows that have long entrances equipped with escape tunnels and routes.

Mockingbirds can imitate almost any sound



A mockingbird can imitate other birds, animals and even mechanical sounds such as a car alarm. As convincing as these imitations may be to humans, they often don't fool other birds.

Goats are Intelligent



Goats are inquisitive, intelligent and readily revert to the wild (become feral) if given the opportunity, which is rare for domesticated animals.

Parrot Talk More than Just Squawking



Parrot speech is commonly regarded as the brainless squawking of a feathered voice recorder. But studies over the past 30 years continually show that parrots engage in much more than mere mimicry. Parrots are capable of logical leaps and can solve certain linguistic processing tasks as deftly as 4-6 year-old children. Parrots appear to grasp concepts like “same” and “different,” “bigger” and “smaller,” “none” and numbers. Perhaps most interestingly, they can combine labels and phrases in novel ways. A January 2007 study in language sciences suggests using patterns of parrot speech learning to develop artificial speech skills in robots.

Birds Use Landmarks to Navigate Long Journeys



Birds like pigeons can fly thousands of miles to find the same roosting spot with no navigational

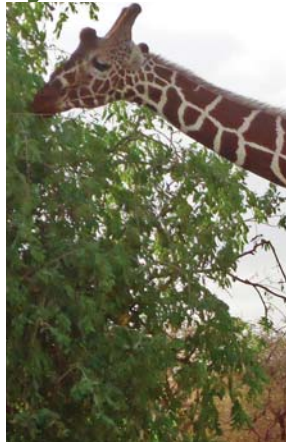
difficulties. Some species of birds, like the Arctic tern, make a 25,000 mile round-trip journey every year. Many species use built-in ferromagnets to detect their orientation with respect to the earth's magnetic field. A November 2006 study published in *Animal Behaviour* suggests that pigeons also use familiar landmarks on the ground below to help find their way home. Still, much about bird navigation remains a mystery.

Mole-Rats aren't Blind



With their puny eyes and underground lifestyle, African mole-rats have long been considered the Mr Magoos of rodents, detecting little light and, it has been suggested, using their eyes more for sensing changes in air currents than for actual vision. But findings of the past few years have shown that African mole-rats have a keen, if limited, sense of sight. Light may suggest that a predator has broken into a tunnel, which could explain why subterranean diggers developed sight in the first place.

You can tell the sex of a giraffe by its horns



It is possible to identify the sex of the giraffe from the horns on its head. Both males and females have horns but the females' are smaller and covered with hair at the top. Male giraffes may have up to three additional horns.

Female leopards produce scent to attract males



Perfume is not a preserve of humans only. When a female leopard is ready to mate, she will give a scent and rub her body on the trees to leave her smell there. Male leopards either smell the females scent or hear her call to know that she is ready to mate.

Camels do not store water in their humps



Contrary to what is believed, camels do not actually hold liquid water in their humps. The humps contain fatty tissue reserves, which can be converted to water or energy when required. They can survive up to six months without food or water by using up these fatty stores.

POEM: THIS KIND OF LOVE

The forest behind my wide window, two hundred metres away belongs to them,

We moved in here 10 years ago just at the peak of heavy rains within the ecosystem,

Those days, in the heavenly breeze of fresh air, I could walk up and down the hill, just to gaze at the gem,

The variety of wildly sounds was music to my ears,

The butterflies flickering and birds ruffling their features in cheer,

And the roses floating on the lake at the foot of the creeper,

The giraffes with their long strides swinging their rear and front legs in one accord,

The lions and their calculated moves determined to hit the target; the power of this big cat is a goad,

The elephants with their frenzy ears; their emotions and intellect intertwined, The gazelles, the zebras all under one shade and co-existing in kindness,

Both consciously in watch-out for the wild cat among other carnivores,

But wise enough to graze far off the hook just in case someone is in search for goodies,

Both the hunter and the hunted appreciative of the vigorous biome,

We undisputedly lived in tranquillity and wellness at the pool of still aqua,

The unforgettable sight of herds of buffalos; their horns of steel and noses lugging in search for a dilemma,

The mysterious semblance of leopards; their slender bodies in unison with their silent hunting adeptness,

But not anymore,

In months and months to years, their lives flushed in my very eyes one by one,

The more they fought for space, the more we encroached and hungered for more,

The more they ran for their lives; the more we followed; spears held on our soiled hands to massacre,

The park is no more; the trees are no more for the few giraffes left to feed on their branch pinnacle,

With our parks turning into battle field for our wildlife and no safer place to call home,

Thousands of elephants have been turned into hollow tusks and teeth tacked together for money,

With ivory trade turning billions into billionaires; trading devotedly life for fatality,

Our ears and eyes have been shut while they helplessly cry out for a remedy,

But what if...

What if we cared enough to think about them?

What if we loved them like our very own sons and daughters?

What if we were keen enough to hear them call out our names?

What if we considered their wellbeing while still designing innovative ideas and infrastructures?

What if we thought of the source of ivory and wild skin before engaging in derogative businesses?

It's this kind of love...

That separates self-interests for the good of all,

That is smart enough to re-evaluate decisions vigilantly and watchful,

That realises the dangers of distinct species of wildlife that lived way before all,

This kind of love our wildlife greatly yearn,

What do they have to do to earn, Is it too much to ask for?

- By Carol Mwende

S	I	L	V	E	R	B	A	C	K
C	C	A	N	E	C	K	I	N	G
R	H	A	O	Q	Z	Y	O	I	J
U	E	F	C	K	B	E	T	P	A
F	E	R	T	I	G	E	R	U	G
F	T	I	U	X	E	A	A	P	L
E	A	C	R	U	D	X	T	Z	I
X	H	A	N	A	G	B	Y	U	O
E	A	T	A	D	P	O	L	E	N
W	H	A	L	E	S	H	A	R	K

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- The particularly loose skin at the back of the neck of a cat, where a mother cat grips her kittens to carry them is called?
- The largest member of the cat family
- The fastest animal?
- Animals that breed faster than any other animal?
- A young frog is called?
- Fight between male and female giraffe
- Leopards are nocturnal because they hunt at?
- A breed between a lion and Jaguar
- They lay the biggest eggs in the world
- An adult male gorilla is called?
- In which continent are gorillas found?
- A baby squirrel is called?

COLOBUS CONSERVATION RESCUE AND REHABILITATION CENTRE DIANI, KENYA



In September 2015, the Colobus Conservation reached out to ANAW to deploy a qualified veterinarian to serve in the organization's rescue center. ANAW fully supports the noble work of Colobus Conservation. Accredited by Kenya Veterinary Board and working closely with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), ANAW responded by organizing the work placement for our veterinarians; Dr. Dennis Bahati, Dr. Edward Kariuki and Dr. Janerose Mutura; each staying for a period of time respectively. The veterinarians learning and contribution has been immense this far, and which has included provision of emergency care and animal treatment, infant hand-rearing and care, sample collection and diagnostics, post-mortem and necropsy, primary husbandry, animal counts and special cases.

Colobus Conservation is designed to promote the conservation, preservation and protection of primates like the nationally threatened Angolan colobus monkey (*Colobus angolensis palliatus*) and its coastal forest habitat in south eastern Kenya. The Centre was established in 1997 in response to an outcry from local residents about the high number of deaths of colobus monkeys on the Diani Beach road.

Visitors are welcome. Please call and support the centre:

Address: P.O. Box 5380, Diani Beach, Kenya, Mobile: +254 (0) 711 479453

Email: <http://www.colobusconservation.org>

TRACE POACHER FOOTSTEPS untangle snares

Would you like to trace poacher footsteps and untangle snares set for wild animals? Hike the hills and watch elephants in their natural habitat? Walk by the beach and help coastal communities rescue turtles? Participate in sports activities with communities bordering wildlife protected areas in campaigns to end bush meat trade? Interact with community members as they bring their pets in for vaccination?



Come join us and have fun as we work to protect, care for and show love to our precious creatures. The friends of ANAW Program reaches out to all outdoor adventure enthusiasts interested in furthering animal welfare and wildlife conservation.

Be a member of the program by signing up on our website, www.anaw.org.

You can also visit our offices at Westend Place Building, 1st Floor Suite 2

Call us on +254 020 600 6510, +254 727 234 447 Email: info@anaw.org; kate@anaw.org