

Komba

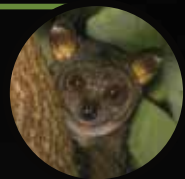
WILDLIFE CLUBS OF KENYA

Komba 1, 2018



INSIDE

Babies from the bush
Meet Kenya's galagos



PLUS
Kenya's
dangerous
snakes



SUDAN

THE LAST MALE NORTHERN WHITE RHINO



Rockpools rock

Hamjambo WCK members

It's our Golden Jubilee!

Started by a group of 12 pupils at Kagumo High School in 1968, the growth of Wildlife Clubs of Kenya has been phenomenal.

WCK is driven by a desire to inspire youngsters in wildlife conservation.

We have played a leading role in wildlife habitat restoration, education for sustainable development, anti-poaching campaigns, de-snaring campaigns, tree planting and more. Many youngsters who have been and - are WCK members - know the importance of wildlife, sustainable habitats and respect for the planet's biodiversity.

WCK has empowered over 10 million Kenyans in the last 50 years, but what matters most now is what we do next. Today I am thinking more about the future of WCK than its past. The ever escalating environmental challenges mean that we must be more active to mitigate environmental crisis.

WCK's motto to 'Learn to conserve for a better tomorrow' is all about that.

Dr Margaret Otieno
WCK National Coordinator

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION EDUCATION

WCK Objectives

- To spread interest and knowledge about wildlife and the environment among the youth of Kenya in particular and East Africa.
- In this way, to increase awareness of the great economic, cultural and aesthetic value of natural resources.
- To develop a better understanding of the need to conserve natural resources for the benefit of the nation and its people.

WCK Club benefits

- 3 issues of Komba-WCK magazine
- Reduced fee to KWS Kenya National Parks & Reserves
- Free lectures and video/slide shows
- Borrow Wildlife Video Films at reduced rates
- Students' half rate accommodation at WCK hostels
- WCK roadshows by the Mobile Education Unit
- The opportunity to help conserve wildlife
- The opportunity to win prizes in WCK competitions
- SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION RATES FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Reminder: Renew your membership at the start of the year!

WCK OFFICES

NAIROBI

Region Head - Philip Gitahi
P. O. Box 20184, P.C. 00200, Nairobi
Tel: 0724 656 667
Email: info@wildlifeclubsofkenya.org

KISUMU

Region Head - Emmanuel Situma
P. O. Box 4201, P.C. 40100, Kisumu
Tel: 0726 448 182
E-mail: wckksm@yahoo.com

MALINDI

Education Officer
P.O. Box 1758, P.C. 80200 Malindi
Tel: 0729 074006, 0734 674593
E-mail: wckmalindi@yahoo.com

MOMBASA

Region Head - Tsafa Mweni
P. O. Box 80591, P.C. 80100, Mombasa
Tel: 0733 700 409, 0710 770 103
E-mail: wckmsa@yahoo.com

NAKURU

Region Head - Albanus Kioko
P. O. Box 33, P.C. 20100, Nakuru
Tel: 020 267155 5/6
Guest House: 020 2671742
E-mail: wcknakuru@gmail.com

KITUI

Assistant Education Officer - Moses Katumbi
P. O. Box 1293, P.C. 90200, Kitui
Tel: 0722 975 523
E-mail: wckkitui@yahoo.com

MERU

Assistant Education Officer - Paul Ndungu
Tel: 0725 808 138
E-mail: wckcentral@yahoo.com

Centre for Tourism Training & Research (CTTR)

Principal - Isabella Mbandi
P. O. Box 20184, P.C. 00200, Nairobi
Tel: 020-8067644, 0726214423, 0724656667, Fax: 891906
Email: cttr@wildlifeclubsofkenya.org

WCK HOSTELS

LAKE NAKURU HOSTEL & GUEST HOUSE

Albanus Kioko - 0202671555 / 0723 760 970

LANG'ATA HOSTEL

Winnie Ndwiga - 0722 782953

KISUMU HOSTEL

Emmanuel Situma - 0726 448 182

MOMBASA HOSTEL AND GUEST COTTAGES

Tsafa Mweni - 0710 770 103 / 0733 700 409

Patron

Dr. David Western

Trustees

Mrs. D. T. Dobie

Mr. Philemon Mwaisaka, EBS,SS

Dr. Ibrahim M. Ali

Governing Council

Chairman: Mrs. Margaret Byama

Secretary: Dr. Margaret Otieno

The WCK Governing Council

is made up of representatives of various stakeholding government ministries & parastatals, conservation entities & club patrons as follows:

Mrs. Margaret Byama - Associate member / Life member

Mr. Jagi Gakunju - Associate Member

Treasury

Ministry of Education Science & Technology

Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife

WCK Regional Representatives

Mr. David Muasya - Eastern Region

Mr. Mtengo Kavia - Coast Region

Mr. David Ndegwa - Rift Valley Region

Ms. Lynnette Bengi - Nairobi Region

Ms. Esther W. Kasavuli - Western Region

Mr. Vincent O. Odhiambo - Nyanza Region

Mr. Ayub Yussuf Mahat - North Eastern Region

Mr. Joseph Warui - Central Region

Komba Editorial

Rupi Mangat - Editor

Margaret Otieno

Edward Mwendwa

Philip Gitahi

Design: Duncan Odhiambo

Cover photo: Chyulu Hills blade-horned chameleon ©
Stephen Spawls

WCK Motto: Learn to conserve for a better tomorrow

Email: info@wildlifeclubsofkenya.org



Komba Magazine



kombamagazine

www.wildlifeclubsofkenya.org

KENYA'S DANGEROUS SNAKES:
How dangerous are they really? Pg. 10

Babies from the bush....
Meet Kenya's galagos Pg. 4

Agama Lizard Pg. 9

A recent discovery Pg. 14

Combating Wildlife Poisoning in the Mara Pg. 15

Rockpools rock Pg. 20



Middle page: LAST NOTHERN MALE WHITE RHINO



**Plus
More
inside**

Babies from the bush.... Meet Kenya's galagos

By Yvonne de Jong, Tom Butynski & Noah Dekker. Photographs and maps by the authors.



Kikuyu small-eared greater galago at Ol Donyo Sabuk National Park, central Kenya.



Black (melanistic) northern silver galagos in Masai Mara National Reserve, southwest Kenya. The galago on the left is a juvenile and the one on the right is an adult.

Large ears, big eyes, fluffy tail, and small....the galagos (also known as 'bushbabies or 'kombas') are fully equipped to qualify as 'Africa's cutest group of mammals'...if you are able to get a glimpse of them!

As you probably know, galagos are arboreal (they occupy trees or bush) and nocturnal (active at night, sleep during the day). With their big eyes, excellent sense of smell, superb hearing, and ability to leap several times their own body length, they 'dominate' Africa's nights. Galagos are omnivorous, their diet includes fruit, gum, and insects. They do not

need to drink---the moisture in and on their food is enough to get by.

Kenya has no fewer than six species and nine subspecies of galago. These range from the tiny Kenya coast galago (scientific name *Paragalago cocos*; only 150 grams in body weight) in the coastal forests, to the northern silver galago (*Otolemur crassicaudatus argenteus*; 1200 grams) in the woodlands of the Masai Mara Ecosystem. During the day galagos usually sleep in dense vegetation, old bird nests, hollow trees, or among thorns. You might even see them sleeping in the roof of a building or a bee-hive.

All galagos make a loud call that is unique to the species; Two species have a loud call that is similar to the cry of a human baby (thus, the name 'bushbaby'). The loud call is a good way to identify the species. If you want to hear what galagos sound like, then go to www.wildsolutions.nl/galago and click on the species you are curious about!

The following is a photographic guide to the greater galagos of Kenya. It will be useful when you want to identify them in your garden or when on safari.

Large-eared greater galago

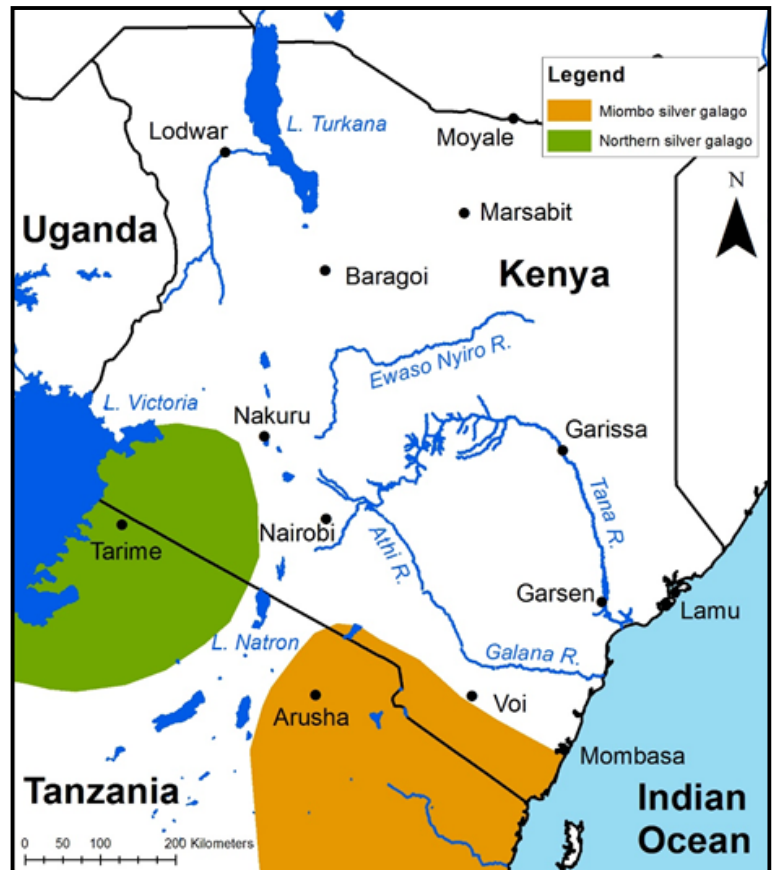
The large-eared greater galago *Otolemur crassicaudatus* occurs in the woodlands of south Kenya. Two subspecies are known for Kenya; the northern silver galago *Otolemur crassicaudatus argentatus* west of the Eastern Rift Valley and the miombo silver galago *Otolemur crassicaudatus monteiri* on the south coast. As the name suggests, the coat of the northern silver galago is silver, but all black ('melanistic') individuals are often encountered.

Small-eared greater galago

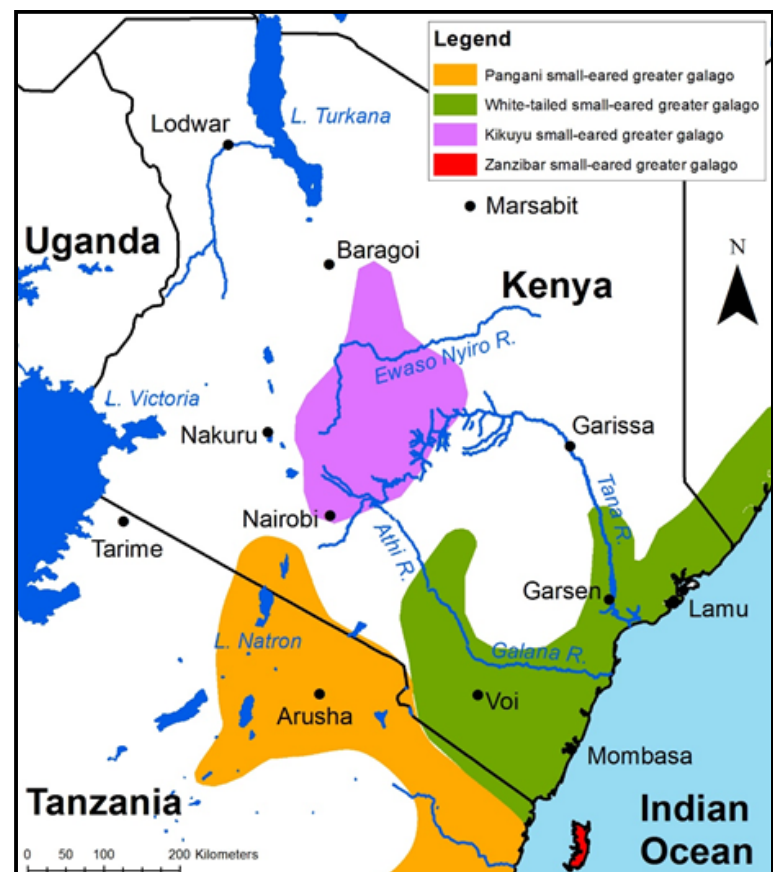
The small-eared greater galago *Otolemur garnettii* is probably the loudest of Kenya's galagos. They live in forests where they feed on fruit and insects. Three subspecies are known to occur in Kenya.



Adult white-tailed small-eared greater galago at Mpeketoni, north coast of Kenya.



Distribution in Kenya of the large-eared greater galago.



Distribution in Kenya of the small-eared greater galago.

WCK Corporate Members

AAR - Holdings
 Access Kenya
 Giraffe Manor Ltd.
 African Line Biuro Trekingowe
 Across Africa Safaris Ltd
 A. F. E. W. Kenya
 Air Kenya Aviation Ltd
 Bata Shoe Company
 Block Hotels Ltd., Nairobi
 Born Free Foundation
 CFBT Education Services
 Cheli and Peacock Ltd
 Coca-Cola (EA) Ltd., Nairobi
 Copy Cat Ltd., Nairobi
 D. T. Dobie Co. Ltd., Nairobi
 Education Insight
 Express (K) Ltd., Nairobi
 Firestone (EA) Ltd.
 Friends of Conservation
 Glaxo Wellcome (K) Ltd.
 Karen Country Club
 Kenya Aerotech Ltd.
 Kenya Wildlife Service
 Kenya Wine Agencies Ltd.
 Kenya Prison Services
 Ker & Downey Safaris
 Kilimanjaro Safari Club
 Kodak (K) Ltd
 Let's Go Travel Ltd.
 Lloyd Masika Ltd.
 Magadi Soda Co. Ltd., Magadi
 Muli & Ole Kina Advocates, Malindi
 Nairobi Upperhill Hotel
 Newent Community School
 Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi
 Oserian Development Co. Ltd.
 Panafrican Paper Mills (EA) Ltd., Nairobi
 Pandhal Harjeet Singh & Sons Ltd
 Safari Seekers (K) Ltd., Nairobi
 Sameer Investments Ltd.
 Sarova Hotels Ltd., Nairobi
 Serena Lodges & Hotels
 Text Book Centre Ltd., Nairobi
 Unilever (K) Ltd.
 United Touring Co. Ltd., Nairobi
 Wildlife Safari (K) Ltd
 World Wide Fund for Nature
 Wonder Foods Ltd
 Yare Camel Club and Camps

WCK HOSTEL CHARGES

LANGATA & MOMBASA

- Wildlife club student members - Ksh 300
- Adult members - Ksh 500
- Non-member student - Ksh 500
- Non-member adults - Ksh 700
- Registered group - per adult - Ksh 600
- Registered group - per student - Ksh 400
- East Africans student member WCU, Malihai Clubs of Tanzania - Ksh 500
- East Africans adult member WCU, Malihai Clubs of Tanzania - Ksh 600
- East Africans non-members - Ksh 800
- Deposit of Ksh. 2000 forfeited if the group does not come
- Booking Ksh 500 with Ksh 300 refundable when the kitchen and utensils are cleaned
- Foreigners Ksh 1000

HALL HIRE

- WCK members - Ksh 5000 per day
- Non-members - Ksh 10000 per day

CAMPING

- Members - Ksh 200
- Non-members - Ksh 250

NAKURU AND KISUMU

- WCK member - Ksh 200
- Non members - Ksh 250
- Foreigners - Ksh 1000
- E. Africans - Ksh 600

NAKURU GUEST HOUSE

- Adult - Ksh 1250
- Children - Ksh 600

MOMBASA COTTAGES

- Singles Ksh 2000
- Doubles Ksh 3000
- Children Ksh 1000

Accommodation rates are per person per night

WCK ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

- Club - Ksh 1000
- Associate - Ksh 500
- Corporate - Ksh 5,000
- Foreign - US\$30 / £20 / €25
- Student membership cards - Ksh 30
- Patron membership card - Ksh 50
- Video library subscription - Ksh 200
- Video library registration - Ksh 500

LIFE MEMBERSHIP
Ksh 100, 000 (One-off payment)

1) **The white-tailed small-eared greater galago** *Otolemur garnettii lasiotis* is in the coastal forests. Despite their name, the tip of the tail can be black (as you can see below)



Adult white-tailed small-eared greater galago at Diani, south coast of Kenya.



Kikuyu small-eared greater galago at Masinga Dam, central Kenya.

2) **The Pangani small-eared greater galago** *Otolemur garnettii panganiensis* occurs in south Kenya where it is sometimes present in the same area as the northern silver galago.



Pangani small-eared greater galago at Usa River, north Tanzania.

3) **The Kikuyu small-eared greater galago** *Otolemur garnettii kikuyuensis* can be found in the montane forests of the central highlands of Kenya, east of the Eastern Rift Valley (including Nairobi, Mount Kenya, and Aberdares Range).

More on galagos in the next
issue of **Komba**
(Komba 2, 2018)

Agama Lizard

By William Oloishorua, WCK Patron at Nkorkorri Boys Wildlife Club, Narok County



Agama mwanzae Mwanza Flat Headed Rock Agama. Photo by S. Spawls.



Agama armata Tropical spiny agama. Photo by S. Spawls.

You see them scuttling around in the bush, the colourful males bobbing their heads up and down. The agama lizard is a small, long tailed, insect eating lizard, and the males very colourful while the females are duller.

The Red-headed agama is a spectacular creature and common in the Mara ecosystem. It is also found further south in Tanzania and in the west around Lake Victoria.



Acanthocercus atricollis Blue-headed tree agama. Photo by P.K. Malonza.

Agamas love eating insects but at times might feed on grass, berries, seeds and the eggs of other smaller lizards.

The male agama is polygamous. Males may hold six or more females in their territory for breeding. They defend their territories and advertise their masculinity with their bright colours.

During courtship, the male bobs his head to impress the female. Occasionally, females start courtship with the male chasing after her. The female lays eggs in clutches of up to twelve.

Did you know?

There is more than one species of agama.

Jacob Mueti Ngwava from the herpetology section of the National Museums of Kenya says to look out for the Blue-headed tree agama in the trees, the tropical spiny agama that lives on the ground and the Mwanza flat-headed rock agama in semi-deserts on – guess what? Rocks.



KENYA'S DANGEROUS SNAKES: How dangerous are they really?

By Sidney Shema

Many people are afraid of snakes and will not hesitate to kill one as soon as they see it. This is due to the negative press that snakes get as bad creatures that are always out to kill us. They really don't deserve the bad reputation.

During a recent Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association talk, top herpetologist Stephen Spawls pointed out some interesting facts about snakes like are they really dangerous?

I'd like to share some of those facts with you and I hope they will help to not only keep you safe from snake bites but also to encourage people to co-exist with snakes.

Kenya has 138 known species of snakes but only 31 are venomous

enough to kill a person. Of these venomous ones, only 18 are known to have actually killed people. But even these snakes do not go out intentionally to kill people. They only attack in self-defence, when they feel threatened. If you leave them alone, they will leave you alone.

“Snakes don't see people as a potential meal. In fact they are afraid of people and would rather avoid an encounter with anyone.

The only reptile in Kenya that sees people as prey and attacks them

with predatory intent is the Nile crocodile. However there are rare cases of very large African Rock Pythons eating or attempting to eat people (mostly children).



Southern African Rock Python.
Photo by Stephen Spawls

With this said, snakes need to be treated with caution.

It isn't always easy to tell whether a snake is dangerous or not (unless you're a herpetologist). It's useful to



Green Mamba. Photo by Stephen Spawls

know which snakes are in the area you are in and which are venomous or non-venomous – including on how to avoid getting bitten by them.

There are three groups that are especially deadly and must be treated with extra caution.

DEADLY VENOMOUS

Vipers and Adders

Vipers are mostly stocky snakes with triangular-shaped heads and rough scales (though not all species). They vary in size, with some species being quite small while others may grow over two metres (6.5 feet) long. The snake that kills the most people in Africa every year is the Puff Adder. It's very widespread.



Puff adder. Photo by Royjan Taylor Bio-Ken Snake Farm Watamu

The reason so many people are killed by it is because it is camouflaged on the ground and freezes when approached rather than moving away (unlike other snakes) which means people accidentally step on it. It does hiss with a puffing sound (hence the name) as a warning when you get too close, so being alert when walking in the bush or farmland can help you avoid it.

Interestingly, an experiment by South African scientists showed that 80-90

per cent of the time, Puff Adders will not bite even when someone gets very close and even step on them! The snake will simply remain motionless hoping that the person moves away. A few other examples of vipers



Gaboon viper - it looks fantastic on a plain background, but on the forest floor it resembles fallen leaves. Photo by Stephen Spawls



Kenya Montane Viper. Photo by Stephen Spawls

in Kenya include the Rhinoceros Viper and Gaboon Viper in western Kenya, the endemic Kenya Horned Viper and Montane Viper in central Kenya, the Northeast African Carpet Viper in the northeast.

Cobras

These long fast-moving snakes raise the front part of their body and spread their neck into a hood



Egyptian Cobra with the white markings on its neck. Photo by Royjan Taylor Bio-Ken Snake Farm Watamu

when threatened. Unlike large vipers, cobras are very active and will move away when approached. So you are less likely to get bitten by one unless you are trying to catch it or kill it. When I was doing bird of prey surveys in Kajiado County in 2017, I had several close encounters with Black-necked Spitting Cobras but never once did any try to attack or even raise its hood. They always simply moved away. Other cobras

in Kenya include the Forest Cobra, Egyptian Cobra, Red Spitting Cobra and Ashe's Spitting Cobra.

in Africa is the Black Mamba, which is reputed to be very aggressive and bad tempered. However, just like the cobras, it will simply move away when approached and only attacks when provoked. I guess that bad temper only shows up when you actually test its patience by trying to catch it or kill it. Two other mambas in Kenya are the Green Mamba at the Coast, and Jameson's Mamba in the western forests.

The Boomslang is a slender arboreal snake that doesn't fall under any of the three groups above, is also highly venomous but it is very shy.

Fast Action

A snake bite must be treated as an emergency. The victim must be rushed to hospital immediately.

People who get medical attention in good time have good chances of surviving a snake bite.

If a spitting cobra spits in your eyes, wash them thoroughly with lots of water for at least 20 minutes and then rush to the hospital.

However, the best way to keep yourself safe is to avoid being bitten in the first place. Remember the golden rule: if you leave them alone, they will leave you alone. If you find a snake in your house, try to chase it out with a broom.

Snakes also don't like chemical smells like paraffin or petrol, so this can be used to chase them out. Keep your garden and house free of rubbish where mice and rats like to hide in. They attract snakes.

Mambas

Similar to cobras but with longer rectangular-shaped heads, they don't have the prominent hoods of the cobras. The most feared snake



Green Mamba. Photo by Stephen Spawls

If the snake can't be easily and safely driven out, the best thing to do is to call a snake expert (like someone from the Nairobi Snake Park at Nairobi Museum or Bio-Ken Snake Farm).

Useful

Snakes are useful. They help to control pests like rats and keep our ecosystems in balance.

Therefore, avoid killing snakes and encourage your family, friends and community to do the same. It is understandable that people are afraid of snakes and want to kill

them on sight, however if we can enlighten people about snakes, they can learn to live with them and ensure our environment remains healthy.

Useful Snake Contacts

East African Snakes and other reptiles, FB forum

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/662521540444058/>

East African Snakes & other reptiles Public Group | Facebook

Bio-Ken

www.bio-ken.com

Emergency snakebites and snake rescue

Coast +254718290824

Mara/Rift: 0713623205;

Nairobi: 0707577748,

0723386558, 0722514398

Great Guide Book – Reptiles of East Africa by Stephen Spawls and others.

Sidney Shema former WCK member at Nairobi University is now a wildlife researcher, safari guide and photographer specialising in birds, but with an interest in nature overall.

REAL LIFE DRAMA

A close encounter with a puff adder

By Ann Kiprop, WCK Kitui office attaché

Snake bites are rampant in the south-eastern region where it's usually hot.

In February this year, a boy was bitten by a puff adder. The case was reported by his aunt to WCK Kitui office from where we headed to KWS office in Mutomo. The child survived because he was treated at the hospital in good time.

Any fatalities that occur are most likely a result of poor medical care and secondary infection. In March 2018, a pupil was bitten at Mwala primary school in Machakos but died due to poor medication.

Prevent snake bites at home

1. Keep your yard and adjacent property mowed.
2. Educate the children about snakes.
3. Use care when handling stored yard materials.

4. Take precautions if you own a snake to avoid being bitten.
5. Use extreme caution if you ever have to approach snake.

Symptoms of a venomous bite

- Redness and swelling
- Stinging or burning sensation on the skin.
- Feeling of nausea
- Dizziness
- Anxiousness
- Confusion
- Severe causes may result paralysis or coma.

Snake bite first aid

Step 1

Lay the victim down and provide reassurance. Call for emergency.

Do not move the victim unless further danger is present.

Step 2

Wrap the entire area with an elastic

piece of cloth or bandage. If it's the limb, leave the toes or fingers unwrapped to monitor circulation.

Step 3

Once the entire area has been covered, mark the bite site with a pen or some dirt from the ground. This is helpful for emergency services personnel.

Step 4

Make the patient comfortable and continue to provide reassurance until arrival of emergency services. Or rush the victim to the nearest hospital, dispensary.

Don't's

- **wash** the bite.
- **cut** the venom out of the limb.
- **suck** the venom out of the limb.
- apply **tourniquet** to the limb
- try to **catch** and identify the snake.

A recent discovery



Chyulu Hills Blade-horned Chameleon. Photo by Stephen Spawls

Do you think that all had been discovered in the wild?

Stephen Spawls is the author of several field guides including the 500-page tome - Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa – published in 2000 with several reprints. It includes Rwanda and Burundi besides Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Co-authored with legends like the late James Ashe, it is a must if you want to know all about African snakes.

Spawls was in Kenya in April 2018 in search of frogs for his new field guide to be published later.

He re-found (in April 2018) the Chyulu Hills Blade-horned

Chameleon that hadn't been seen in nearly 40 years in Chyulu Hills.

He writes:

The scientific name of the species is *Kinyongia tavetana*, the Mt Kilimanjaro Two-horned Chameleon. Although the species is also found around Mt Kilimanjaro, the Chyulu Hills specimens, being isolated, are probably going to be re-classified as a separate species.

They were first located by the Coryndon Museum (now National Museums of Kenya) expedition to the Chyulu Hills in the 1930's. Subsequently one specimen was given to the National Museum in 1981. Since then, several prominent herpetologists have searched

for this chameleon in the Chyulu Hills and failed to find it.

There was speculation that it might have become extinct. So by managing to find it, we confirm that it is still there.

The chameleon is found in trees, in the forest patches, where there are tall trees and a closed canopy, at medium to high altitude, over 1,200 metres (nearly 4,000 feet). Before that it hadn't been seen since 1981 (and before that, 1939).

Next time you are on safari keep your eyes open – you might discover something too.

Combating Wildlife Poisoning in the Mara

By Rebecca Ikachoi and Michael Kaelo, Mara Predator Conservation Program Kenya Wildlife Trust



Lion poisoned in Masai Mara

One of the most famous destinations in Kenya is the Maasai Mara National Reserve. It is known for the 'Big five' - lion, rhino, elephant, buffalo and leopard. The Maasai have always lived adjacent to this national reserve and conservancy boundaries. They keep livestock like cattle, sheep and goats.

Living close to wildlife does cause conflict with the wildlife.

The Human-Wildlife Conflict

Predators like lions and leopards do kill livestock that belong to the Maasai. It's called the human-wildlife conflict (HWC).

When predators kill livestock, people are deprived of their livelihood. They become very angry and resort to killing these predators. It's called retaliatory attacks.

In many cases, herders drive their livestock into the reserve at night so the animals can graze. It is illegal and attacks happen.

In the past, lions were killed by the Maasai using spears which was dangerous as sometimes people also got killed by lions during that process.

The government has banned killing wildlife and imposed a fine of Ksh 20

million or life imprisonment for those found guilty as stated in the Wildlife Conservation and Compensation Act 2013. This Act does compensate for livestock killed by selected wildlife, damage to property and loss of lives but compensating all cases is a challenge because there's not enough money.

This makes people who have lost their livestock (which means their livelihood) to wildlife - angry.

Poisoning Predators

People poison predators because it is difficult to point out the person responsible for putting poison on a carcass. It is also quick and less risky than chasing lions with a spear.

But poisoning carcasses leads to a lot of death – for both the guilty predator and innocent predators.

Here's an example.

A cow gets killed by a lion or leopard.

The angry owner then lays a trap to kill the lion or leopard that killed the cow. He puts poison on the carcass of the cow so that when the guilty lion or leopard returns to feed on it, it will die – and supposedly the livestock owner has solved the problem.

But that's not so.

Hyenas and vultures are attracted to the carcass and come for an easy meal but they become victims of poisoning.

This can lead to wildlife becoming extinct.

DEATH BY POISONING

December 2015

The famous Marsh Pride, the world's most famous lions that the BBC filmed for the hugely popular TV series 'Big Cat Diary' from 1996 to 2008 were poisoned. Three of the pride's lions died and more than six vultures. The lions had killed cattle belonging to a family living near the reserve. Then a member of the family sprinkled pesticide on the carcass, knowing that the lions would return. He was intentionally trying to kill them.

February 2018

In Tanzania's Ruaha National Park six lions and 72 vultures including other wildlife were poisoned.

Poisoning vultures makes no sense because vultures help to keep the environment clean and disease-free by eating dead animals that would otherwise rot, stink and spread diseases such as anthrax and rabies.

Solutions

The Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) with Nature Kenya (NK) are training conservancy rangers on how to deal with poisoning incidents. Rangers are the first people to usually see these poisoning cases when on their daily patrol.

These rangers will share the skills so that in the event a wildlife poisoning, everyone is able to quickly act to save the wildlife from death by poisoning.

www.kenyawildlifetrust.org
+254 (0) 20 2585481

SUDAN

THE LAST NORTHERN WHITE RHINO
.....
1973 - 2018

Photo by Tierney Ferrell





WCK HQ News

WCK in Austria



Dr. Margaret Otieno was in Austria this February and presented a talk at the Salzburg Global Seminar on 'Nature and Childhood: From Research and Activism to Policies for Global Change'.

The discussions during the conference showed that young people with greater access to nature and outdoor play are healthier and brighter at school.

Nature trail at WCK member school for all to enjoy.



WCK members on a nature walk.

Here are a few examples:

- According to a 2014 study, students with trees outside school windows have higher test scores and graduation rates,. Scientists compared the performance of primary school students with the amount of greenery in their surroundings using satellite imagery. They found that the students exposed to more greenery performed better in English and math.
- Nature walks are healthy – you learn to socialize, reduce stress and aggression.
- Being outdoors in nature enables learners to focus.
- Learning about nature helps make youngsters develop environmental ethics for life.
- Nature helps youngsters develop factual knowledge about the natural environment, how ecosystems work and human impacts on the natural environment.
- Youngsters develop eco-friendly habits, such as recycling and being less wasteful and nurturing their relationship with nature.



WCK member planting a tree.

To celebrate WCK 50 years there are activities planned between March and August 2018.

We are asking the founding members whose passion to conserve wildlife and biodiversity inspired the start of WCK to be with us.

The activities will also seek stakeholders, new donors and partners to strengthen its endowment fund for the next 50 years and beyond.

Watch on Youtube

**www.wildlifeclubsofkenya.org
about WCK from its start in 1968
to present time. Please DONATE
for us to continue with our work
in conservation education.**

.....

To donate email:
WCK with title Donation to
info@wildlifeclubsofkenya.org

Research on Speke's Weaver colony in Kinangop

By Paul Kimani



Speke's Weaver building a nest. Image by Steve Gette

Did you know that in Africa, Kenya is second to the Democratic Republic of Congo in number of bird species? Now you know! Kenya is a bird watchers paradise with over 1100 species of birds recorded as of 2009. In Kenya, the weaver family (Ploceidae) has 53 species.

This study was carried out in the Kinangop grassland (Nyandarua County), which is one of the Kenya's 67 globally-recognized sites important for birds' conservation, popularly known as the Important Bird Areas (IBAs). The purpose was to establish the Speke's weaver's nesting colony location, colony size and orientation of nests.

Speke's weaver (*Ploceus spekei*) is a native bird of Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and Ethiopia. Unlike many weavers, Speke's weaver has the same plumage all year round. The

adult male is yellow with black throat, face, and bill while the adult female's upper parts are dull olive-grey with brownish streaks; the under parts are pale yellow, whiter on the belly and greyer on the flanks.

Males usually make more than one nest per breeding season from which females select the best. Once a nest is chosen, they mate after which eggs are laid. Females incubate and raise chicks on their own while the male continues to build more nests and attract as many females as possible to his nests.

The study examined 30 different colonies whose sizes ranged from three to 408 nests. Findings of this study showed that the Speke's Weaver built their colonies on a single or several trees of different species. Majority of these colonies were around homesteads (53%) followed by grasslands (17%) and roadside (13%). Further, 10% were found in shopping centers and in croplands (7%). The preferred host trees were cypress and eucalyptus, the two being the common trees in the landscape. The nests were placed on host trees regardless of the direction of the sun.

Interesting finding

Most colonies around homesteads faced the home compound. Perhaps, they find it safer with people around them against predation from birds of

prey and snakes. However, colonies in a tree on the edge of a road or next to water pans had nests facing all directions – possibly to keep watch in all directions.

At one time, an Augur buzzard was seen nesting on top of a Speke's weaver nests tree. The buzzard is not known to predate on weavers' nests. This relationship could therefore be mutual where the weavers feel protected by the mighty buzzard who they alert to the presence of a potential predator. They would perhaps jointly chase away the predator (such as snakes) and thus protect their eggs and chicks.

From the findings of this study, Speke's weavers seem also to prefer building their colonies where there is enough source of nesting materials, usually grass blades such as maize, fodder grasses and even flowers to make their nests look beautiful.

Paul Kimani studied tourism and wildlife management at the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya - Center for Tourism training & Research College (WCK – CTTR). This study was conducted as partial fulfillment for the completion of the course. The research was supervised by Mr. Katana Baya, lecturer at the WCK – CTTR College while Mr. Wanyoike Wamiti of the National Museums of Kenya assisted with data analysis.

Rockpools rock

By Peter Musembi, Marine researcher at A Rocha, Kenya

Walking along the beach at low tide, look out for rockpools that are seen when the tide is out. Then carefully walk closer and navigate your way around them, better with a local guide who knows where they are and discover the ocean creatures in them.

In Watamu on Kenya's north coast, there is one such rockpool around a huge rock. Migrant birds like Grey plovers fly as far from the Arctic to escape the cold and settle on the rock to rest and feed before flying back to the Arctic - a flight of 7000 kilometers.



Grey plovers from Arctic fly in to Indian Ocean coast to escape winter in the northern hemisphere. Photo by Rupī Mangat

Back to rockpools. They are unique, formed from thousands of years of erosion of fossilized coral reefs.

They then become a jigsaw of pools, holes, crevices, ledges and small channels which at low tide are filled with salty ocean water.



Rockpools on kenyan coast.

Life in a Rockpool

Rockpools are micro-habitats where many diverse creatures live. Juvenile butterfly fish shelter from predators in the coral reefs, lionfish with their beautiful but dangerous spines wait for something to prey on and moray eels slither through the crevices hunting for crabs while birds lurk around to catch a mollusk.

Life in a rockpool is not easy. Creatures that live in them like eels, fish, mollusks, crabs, prawns, sea sponges, sea cucumbers,

anemones and many others have to deal with the constantly changing conditions of the crashing waves and water temperatures including things like predators lurking around to grab them at low tide.

In some places, local people search rockpools for fish, crabs, oysters and even octopus which contribute to food security and livelihoods.

Over-exploitation of species in the rockpools disrupts their ecological balance in the marine ecosystem.

Threats

Rockpools face many threats - natural and human related.

Here are some reasons

Land-based pollution and runoffs drain into rockpools filling them with toxins and sediments that harm marine life.



Do NOT put your hands in rockpools to take out such wildlife. The Puffer fish has venomous spines. It is very dangerous.

Easy to get to, rockpools are vulnerable to unregulated and intensive use by humans.

When people are not careful, they trample on delicate marine life.

Coastal development like building close to the beach and dredging can smother and kill marine life in the pools.

Next time you're by the beach, put on your reef shoes and explore them. You will be amazed at what's going on in them. But do not try to catch or hold any of the creatures in them – and ask your guide not to disturb the creatures.

Creatures of the Rockpools

Moray eels are fish that have a “snake-like” body. They are commonly found in reefs and

shallow areas hiding in crevices and holes with only their head out. Their mouth are mostly open revealing a set of teeth which they use to grasp their prey. Unlike most fishes moray eels do not have scales. Instead their bodies produce a slippery mucus that protect them from predators.

Sea cucumber belong to the group echinoderms together with seastars and sea urchin. Their shape is elongated and some can get very long. They eat stuff on the sea bottom

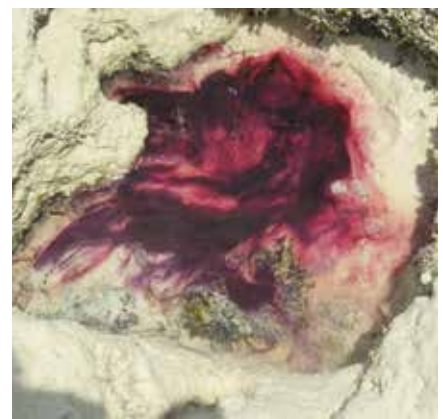


Sea cucumber in rock pool.
Photo by Rupi Mangat

and so help keep the ocean floor clean. Some are a delicacy to eat especially in Asia and this is a threat to them.

Sea hare - *Dolabella auricularia*

It excretes a purple substance when disturbed to deter and escape from predators. The purple smoke like substance is thought to be a by-product of red algae that they eat.



The sea hare releases red die to ward off predators. Photo by Rupi Mangat

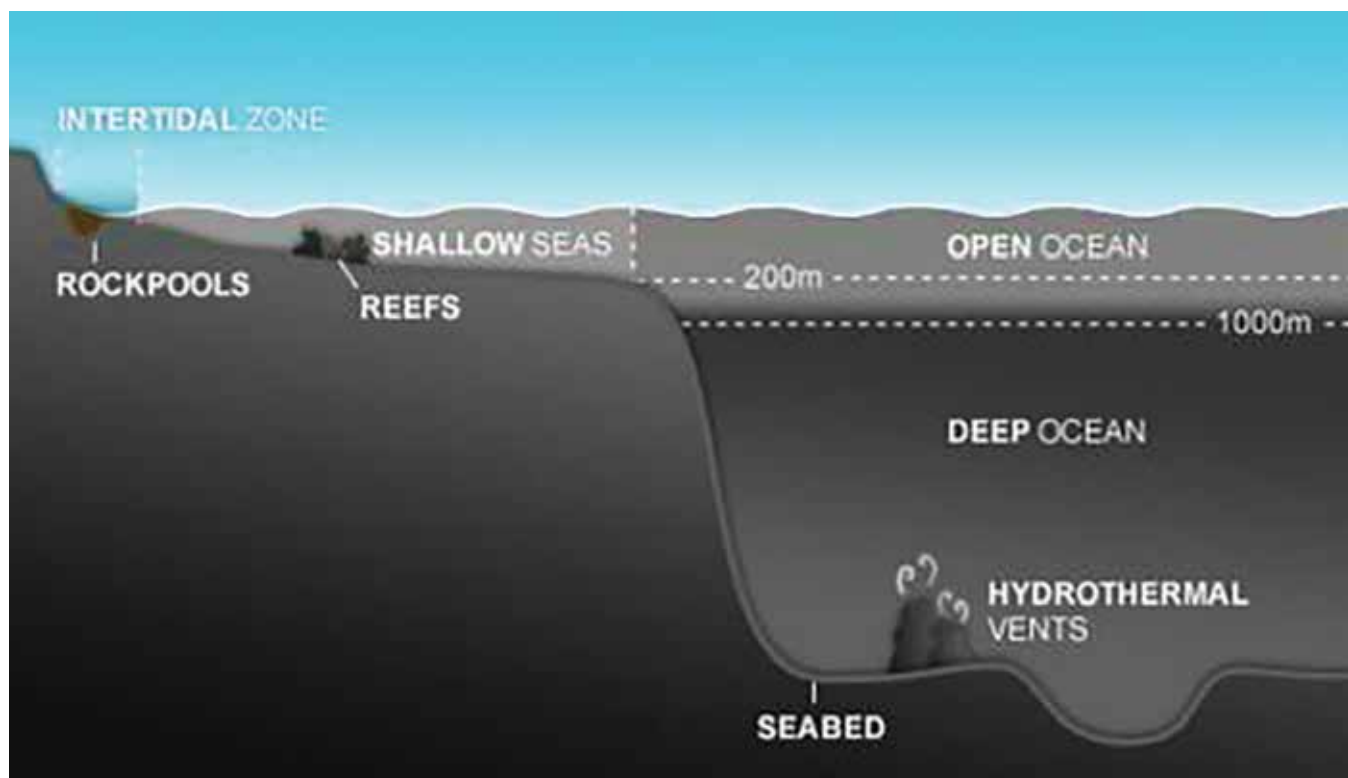


Diagram of rockpool

Tall tale of bush craft & survival

By Mercy Titeu, former student at Wildlife Clubs of Kenya - Centre for Tourism Training & Research



Mercy during an abseiling and rappelling class.

I remember my fears. I remember my conquests. I remember the reassurances from my friends. I remember my tears. I remember my instructors. I remember my wonderful experience training in bush craft and survival techniques at the end of my diploma course at Centre for Tourism Training & Research (CTTR).

Early September 2017, we pitched our tents near Eremit Primary School in Kajiado. It was a beautiful place with dry scattered shrubs and grass with the leafy toothbrush trees called *Oremit* by the Maasai.



Walking the talk during the training.

Our camp was at the foot of a steep hill. A large boulder marked with a white cross overlooked the camp from the east. From a distance, you could see livestock, common zebras and scattered homesteads. This was to be our home for the next fourteen days working towards a diploma in Wildlife and Tourism Management.

As the rumbling engine of our college bus faded away and the dust settled behind it, I felt abandoned. It had begun. I was scared.

After a brief orientation from our instructors Geoffrey Mukangula and Wilfred Kioko, we settled down to our makeshift kitchen, devoid of any trappings of a modern kitchen, to prepare dinner before gathering around a bonfire which we baptised *Kamukunji*. In English it translates to students' assembly. For the next fourteen days, the *Kamukunji* was a place to share our experiences, square out our differences and laugh our hearts out after an adventurous day.

In our new abode, the days began at exactly 5:55 a.m. with a morning run. This gave way to learning outdoor survival skills. There was never a

dull moment. We learnt the joy of team work in the outdoors during team building.

Most of our training took place within a 15-kilometre radius from our base camp. Though at first I was cynical of the site, I ended up appreciating its richness as a training ground. The terrain was rugged, hilly, rocky, flat and dry - all in one. The local *Maa* community was welcoming as we traversed through their land during our practical bushwalking classes. With such a vast training area, we perfected our map-reading and land navigation skills, though at times fatigue gave in and I foolishly followed the group leaders.

On two occasions, we embarked on long hikes to put into practice essential skills of land navigation, bush-trekking and backpacking. At some point I felt like giving up as the sweltering heat took a toll on my psyche. My lips were dry and my skin cracked. I was dehydrated and hungry. The daily food ration was not enough for the belly. But we kept moving along the scorching earth.

I had come too far to call it quits. Besides, there was nowhere to go

in this remote place. Looking around me, I was not alone. My colleagues too were suffering.

On one hike, a student pretended to faint. As others rushed to help, some of us stopped to catch our breath and dumped ourselves under anything that had a shade. It was a test of our ability to act under pressure and fatigue. We had failed our group but I personally learnt that survival requires a lot of physical and mental preparation. It also requires a lot of practice in difficult skills like first aid.

With time, my body adjusted to the daily hikes and the morning run began to feel really good. **When my phone battery drained, I had more time to enjoy nature and have real face-to-face conversation with people.** My sleep cycle felt natural and I no longer struggled to wake up early. It was like I had hit a reset button on my body.

It became thrilling and fun. I did rock climbing, abseiling and rappelling for the first time in my life. I managed to master my fear. I learnt about river crossing, rope skills, fire making, communication in the wilderness and leadership skills. Above all, the training instilled in me self-confidence and resilience.

I thank WCK-CTTR for the valuable training and to our instructors from Mbugani Ventures, Geoffrey Mukangula and Wilfred Kioko for the life-skill training.



Team building in the wild.

SUDAN

THE LAST MALE NORTHERN WHITE RHINO DIES



Sudan. Photo by Jonathan Cook



Sudan, the world's last male northern white rhino, age 45, died at Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya on March 19th, 2018. Sudan was being treated for age-related complications that led to degenerative changes in muscles and bones combined with extensive skin wounds. At the end, the veterinary team from the Dv r Králové Zoo, Ol Pejeta

and Kenya Wildlife Service made the decision to euthanize him.

Sudan had memorable life.

In the 1970s, he escaped extinction of his kind in the wild when he was moved to Dvůr Králové Zoo. He sired two females. Because he was the last male standing, his genetic material was collected when he died to try to use it for reproduction



Sudan in Dvur Kralove zoo. Photo by Tomas Hajnys



Rangers pay tribute to Sudan in Ol Pejeta

of northern white rhinos through advanced cellular technologies. During his final years, Sudan came back to Africa and stole the heart of many. WCK members were privileged to meet him in Ol Pejeta.

Sudan's death leaves just two female northern white rhinos on the planet; his daughter Najin and her daughter Fatu, who remain at Ol Pejeta.

How did the northern white rhino come to this point of extinction in the wild?

The poaching crisis of the 1970s and 80s, fueled by demand for rhino horn in Traditional Chinese Medicine in Asia and dagger handles in Yemen, wiped out the northern white rhino populations in Uganda, Central African Republic, Sudan and Chad. The last remaining wild population of 20-30 rhinos in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were poached or killed during the 1990s and early 2000s. By 2008, the northern white rhino was considered by most experts to be extinct in the wild.

In 2009, the last four fertile northern white rhinos – two males and two females – were moved to Ol Pejeta from Dvůr Králové Zoo in the Czech Republic, with support from Fauna & Flora International and the Kenya Wildlife Service.

It was hoped that the climate and rich grasslands of the Conservancy, similar to the native habitat of this subspecies, would provide them with more favourable breeding conditions.

On arrival at Ol Pejeta, the four were placed under 24 hour armed surveillance, and fed a supplemented diet. But there were no off-springs.

What's next?

With options running out, scientists are attempting to develop "artificial reproductive techniques" (or ARTs), including IVF to rescue this subspecies. This has never been done before in rhinos and does not come without risks.

It's also going to be a very expensive procedure – costing as much as US\$ 9 million. To help raise the funds for preserving this subspecies before it's too late, visit <http://donate.olpejetaconservancy.org/projects/sudan>.



Use waste to make money

By Moses Katumbi, WCK Kitui

On 9th Sep 2018 a major clean – up exercise was held in Kitui town to celebrate the world clean-up day led by WCK, Green Culture Initiative, NGOs and the local community.

Later, a three-day training workshop was held on how to make money using plastics to make things like wild animals that can be used as an income generating project.

Plastic is a nuisance to our environment but we can recycle plastic to make money.



Recycling plastic to make a tall giraffe, a zebra and a gazelle



Getting ready to plant trees.

Model Schools project

WCK and the County Government of Kitui through the county ministry of environment have launched a unique project with selected schools to be centres for environmental matters.

The projects will be centred on conservation like planting trees in degraded areas, establishing tree

nurseries and taking measures to conserve soil.

Ikoo Valley

This famous valley is at Migwani in Kitui County. It is believed to have been formed during the Mozambique belt metamorphism.

The fault is 20 kilometres long. It is a 300-metre deep V-shaped gorge

at its western end, which is further widened by the Ikoo River flowing along it.

It is a breath-taking standing at its edge. The Kamba people used the valley as a natural fortress against the spear-wielding Maasai warriors during tribal wars in the past.



Ikoo valley

Know your tree

Did you know this about *Maseno*?

Most of us Kenyans would think of the town in western Kenya near Lake Victoria with the Equator passing through it and famous for its university.

But it's also the Luhya name for one kind of a fig...

Now read what Dr Mark Nicholson, director of Plants for Life at Brackenhurst Botanic Garden in Tigoni writes.

There are at least 32 different types (species) of fig trees in Kenya.

The most well-known is the Strangler Fig (*Ficus thonningii*) or *mugumu* which is a sacred tree of the wa-Gikuyu. It is called strangler because it can germinate on other trees when birds leave their droppings on a tree. The roots go down the host tree and in time the fig will 'strangle' the host tree.

***Ficus exasperata* or Maseno**

The fig leaf belongs to *Ficus exasperata*. It is extremely rough and sandpapery.



Strangler fig. Picture by Raju Mangat

The strange thing about it is that the young leaves are deeply lobed but the older leaves become 'normal' leaf-shaped. If you break a leaf stalk you will see the white latex, which has been used to make rubber in the past but these days rubber comes from a different tree.

This fig comes from western Kenya such as Kakamega forest - so it has a Luhya name of *maseno*. It can grow very tall to about 30 meters

or 100 feet. Like all fig trees, it has small red or yellow fruits (figs) 8-17 mm across and also sandpapery. They are edible but not very exciting for humans, though birds and monkeys love them.

Most figs require a small specialized wasp to fertilize the flowers. If there are no wasps, there will be no figs!

Rhyme for Taita Apalis

By Tsofa Mweni, WCK Head of Coast Region



Adult Taita apalis. Photo by Luca Borghesio

The freezing droplets of
water make me shudder
As I tip-toe silently between
the gigantic boulders
Up the ridges in the
rich Taita Hills, warmly
dressed like a soldier.

Searching with nervous
excitement, in the bushes
where sunlight reaches
A petite bird flits
through the twigs
Feeding ravenously on
insects and worms.

The Taita apalis is diminishing
by the day, as trees are cut
Their home is only atop the

Taita Hills forests of Ngangao,
Vuria, Msindunyi and Iyale
We need to rehabilitate the
indigenous forests to give the
birds a chance to survive.

Some youth make a
sport, to score birds with
catapults and stones
It's a silly game wrong and
unfair, to kill the birds
They face enough
dangers each day.

Let's act together to stop
the wanton clearing of
these old forests
For where will the birds lay
their eggs, to breed from

November to February?
Let's conserve our forest for
Taita apalis, our precious gem.

Many unique benefits
they provide, completing
the food web
Reducing unwanted
insects and gnats
Attracting tourists to see
the flying gems, we make
friends world over.

The only home is the indigenous
forests of Taita hills
That the beautiful Taita
apalis crowns
Let's conserve our forests,
Let's celebrate the Taita apalis.



Wildlife Clubs of Kenya

Centre for Tourism Training & Research

~Training for conservation~



Our Courses

- ☐ Certificate in Wildlife Conservation & Tour Guiding (1 Year)
Qualification D+ (Plus)
- ☐ Certificate in Catering Operations (1 year)
Qualification D+ (Plus)
- ☐ Diploma in Wildlife & Tourism Management (2 Years)
Qualification C- (Minus)
- ☐ Diploma in Hotel & Restaurant Management (2 years)
Qualification C- (Minus)
- ☐ **Bridging course** for Certificate in Catering Operations & Certificate in Wildlife Conservation & Tour guiding for those who do not qualify for direct entry. (1 semester)
Qualification D (Plain)

INTAKES:
JANUARY
MAY
SEPTEMBER

Admission Help Line: 0726 214 423 / 0724 656 667 / (020) 806 7644

cttr@wildlifeclubsofkenya.org / cttrcollege@gmail.com

www.wildlifeclubsofkenya.org

African Fund for Endangered Wildlife - Kenya

GIRAFFE CENTRE

A.F.E.W. Kenya was founded in 1979 by the late Jock Leslie Melville and his American wife the late Betty. Their vision was to save the endangered Rothschild giraffe as well as establish an education centre. The giraffe centre was opened to the general public in 1983 and is located in the suburbs of Karen-Hardy area about 15Kms from the Nairobi City Centre. The Centre is open Seven Days a week from **9.00 am to 5.30 pm** where visitors have a rare opportunity to feed the giraffes in close proximity and for the daring ones to get a kiss. Guided walks are conducted within an expansive dry forest where rare birds can be sighted.

The Centre is open free of charge to learning institutions who have made **prior booking** during the week days as from **9.00 am to 12.00 pm**. We however encourage donations from the visiting institutions which are directed towards the ecology trip programme for the underprivileged children in Nairobi. For more information kindly contact the Education Department using the contacts below.

Other Facilities include:

- » Daisy Zoovenir Shop. Stocked with locally produced hand made products by self help groups
- » Tea House
- » Auditoriums for watching wildlife videos programmes
- » Funding of conservation projects
- » Ecology trips for underprivileged children
- » Workshops on sustainable environmental conservation for school teachers.

Contacts:

A.F.E.W - K. Ltd.
P. O. Box 15124-00509 ,Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 807 0804/202 5189:
Cell: +254 734 890 952, 723 786 165
Email: info@giraffecentre.org
Website: www.giraffecenter.org

