



FRIENDS OF NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK NEWS

NEWSLETTER

JULY
2021

Tanvir Ali

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*Content, articles & photos sourced, edited and compiled by
Mutwiri Felix*



**Jonathan Pereira
Board Chairman
FoNNaP**

Dear Members,

I hope and pray that all members are keeping healthy and safe during these Corona times.

July 2021 was a busy month at FoNNaP. In order to increase membership and generate revenue from merchandise sales on July 10th and 11th 2021. Board members together with Felix spent two days at the KWS main gate for the exercise that raised Kshs 69950.00. My sincere appreciation to Kenya Wildlife Service for granting us the permission to use the area free of charge.

On July 17th 2021, we had the monthly members parthenium pull out exercise. This was conducted on the road between no 7 and no 8. Sadly there were more volunteers than members for this event. It is my sincere hope that more members participate in this important exercise. It is a very labour-intensive exercise to remove the parthenium plant which will eventually see the eradication of this invasive species.

The Patrol team continues to provide valuable support to Kenya Wildlife Service in the park on almost a daily basis. The team is more visible on weekends when the park has more visitors. Thank you to the team for the time, effort and resources to do their duty on a weekly basis. Being present on the ground helps maintain sanity in the park.

At the end of July, our board member, Ms Gaye Dacosta, resigned due to personal commitments. The board will seek a replacement from the membership in the near future.

On the financial side, FoNNaP, is not in a very healthy position and implore those members who have not renewed their memberships to please do so at your earliest convenience. I also urge members to spread the word among friends and relatives and encourage them to join FoNNaP. We have currently only 200 members excluding Corporate Members. If we can increase this to 500 in the coming months, it will greatly improve our financial position.

Stay safe and healthy

Regards

Jonathan Pereira
Chairman

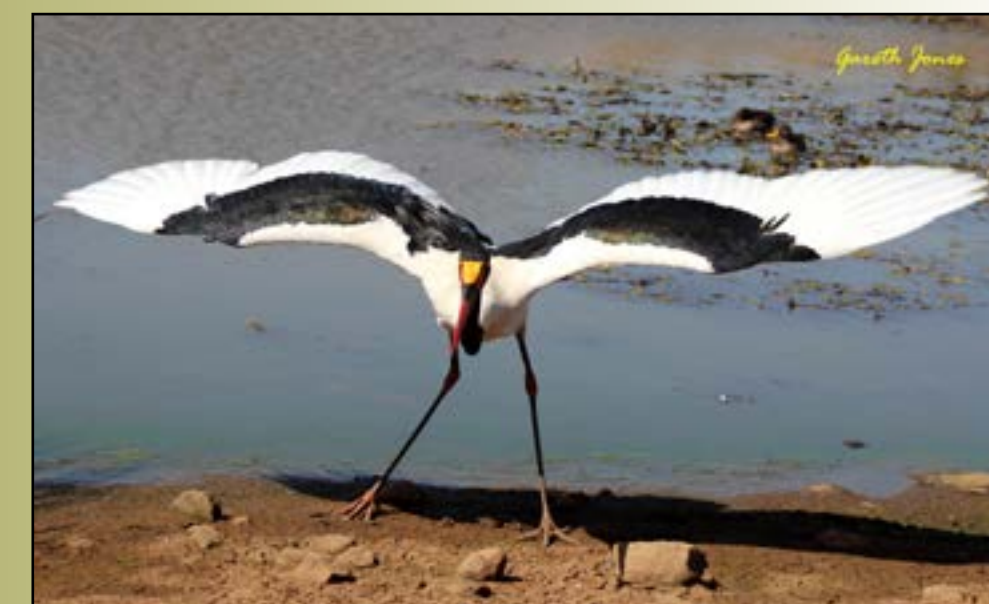
As I approached a dam in the forest near the Langata gate, a flash of colour caught my eye, there in the midst of the reeds was a magnificent saddle-billed stork. I sat quietly and watched for a while. It was obvious that this stork was trying to hunt in the late afternoon . Many storks including saddle-billed use their necks as a kind of wound up whiplash as they coil their necks up , then at the appropriate time release in the rapid elastic like action that often results in prey like fish and other aquatic creatures being impaled on their lethal bill . Suddenly the stork lunged forward and emerged from the reeds with a frog , then in one open billed action gulp , it was 'goodbye freddy'".



On another occasion as I approached the stream crossing area a flash of colour caught my eye , there next to a small bush were two magnificent saddlebill storks .They were undoubtedly on "honeymoon" and the male was flapping his wings and really trying to show off to this "lady" , but the female in typical fashion showed very little interest and kept aloof , as she waited for the male to seemingly impress her . Eventually the female flew off and the male eagerly followed her , hopefully the "stork honeymoon" helped to increase their population .



Watching a saddle-billed stork bathing itself is quite interesting to watch and is something that few people have ever seen . Late one afternoon I rounded a corner and found a saddle-billed stork very close to the road , about to bathe in a deep pond .The stork slowly sank deep into the water , and then while maintaining depth flapped its wings rapidly , this action resulted in the shower of water that seemingly cleaned the bird .This "sink and flap" action of bathing was done repeatedly for a few minutes . Eventually the supposedly clean stork (are muddy ponds clean ?) emerged from the water , and stood on the bank flapping its wings widely , and then holding its wings wide open to accelerate the drying process .



To actually see a saddlebill in the wild is always a thrill as they are large , impressive and colourful , in many parts of Africa these storks are very rare , so to actually have them in the Nairobi National Park is wonderful . However to me these storks are much more than mere Saddle-billed storks , I sometimes also refer to them as the "Thrill-bill" storks due to their incredible bills , they are not just beautiful in striking colours , but are formidable in size as well .The massive bill (up to 36cm long) is red with a black band and a yellow frontal shield (the "saddle"). It is useful to note that the males have yellow wattles just below their bills and red-brown eyes, while the females have no wattles and yellow eyes. Saddle billed storks are big birds that grow to a height of about 150 cm , a length of 142 cm and can have a 2.4–2.7 m wingspan.The male is larger and heavier than the female, weighing anywhere from 5.1–7.52 kg .The female will weigh between 5 and 6.84 kg .At almost five feet tall, this stork is the tallest stork species in the world .

They are silent except for the bill-clacking noise they make at their nests.The saddle-billed stork doesn't have a syrinx, which is the vocal organ of birds.The syrinx is the vibrating cavity found in the breasts of many birds which allow them to trill, warble, whistle or sing. Because storks don't have a syrinx, chicks make hissing sounds when wanting their parents' attention, but in adulthood they are mute.



The saddle-billed stork has a diet based on fish, crustaceans (crabs, shrimps), and amphibians (frogs). But they will also eat small reptiles (lizards, salamanders), mollusks, bird eggs, small mammals, and large water-beetles. Because the storks will use their beaks to stir up the water to flush out the fish, this causes the water to become muddy as well as the fish so they often wash their fish before consuming them whole.

I know of some people that visit the park for the prime purpose of going on a "birding safari" , there are so many hundreds of species to see at all times of the year . It is good to stop at a rest site or just switch off the car engine and listen to the incredible variety bird songs that God has created , it is very calming and helps relieve stress . So next time you visit the Nairobi National Park be on the look-out , you never know , you may have a "thrill-bill" sighting .

This December we will be marking 75 years since the establishment of the amazing, resilient and magnificent Nairobi National Park (NNP). Established in 1946, before Kenya gained her independence at the time when the colonial government had just started embracing the ideology of protecting natural landscapes through the new management system of National Parks.

The National Park ideology dates back to 19th century. This new system of management was first adopted in the United States of America with the establishment of the world's oldest National park; THE YELLOW STONE NATIONAL PARK established in 1872. National Parks were established to protect places considered to be natural environments and still with socio economic and cultural interests.

Since then, Protected areas have acted as the only refuge for the World's biodiversity and they are also pristine environs for the recreation of human spirit.

NNP is a full representation of the natural landscape of Nairobi before massive infrastructural development we are witnessing today. It is actually a combination of both cultural & human practices embraced by Kenya's indigenous communities. Since 1946 there has been a tremendous change in the political, economic and social structures which has in turn led to a mind transformation on how we treat and interact with our natural resources.

The huge economic evolution experienced in African countries has elevated the standards of living of humanity creating unprecedented rise on the demand for natural resources. The globalization of the world economy has facilitated the illegal transfer of Africa's natural heritage at the expense of our own biodiversity. The uncontrolled harvesting of wildlife especially in the 20th century happened without considering the threats it causes to future generations.

NNP is evident enough of an ecosystem whose future can be doubted as a result of endless rising threats. Considering that the park is in the middle of a developing city there is no doubt that public engagement is indispensable.

THREATS FACING NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

For decades now, environmental enthusiasts, wildlife defenders and governments have been fighting against increasing issues threatening the existence of Kenya's wildlife. It is very discouraging to learn that some of these defenders have lost their lives in the course of fighting for what they strongly believe in.

The recent threats facing NNP are colonisation of a number of Invasive species and the increased wetland pollution arising from the communities, industries, and estates adjacent to the park ecosystem. They all have identified the park as an easy way to channel polluted effluents without fully understanding the dangers these discharges are causing to entire park ecosystem.



Liquid and solid effluents along the park boundary. Photo credit- Olga Ercolano

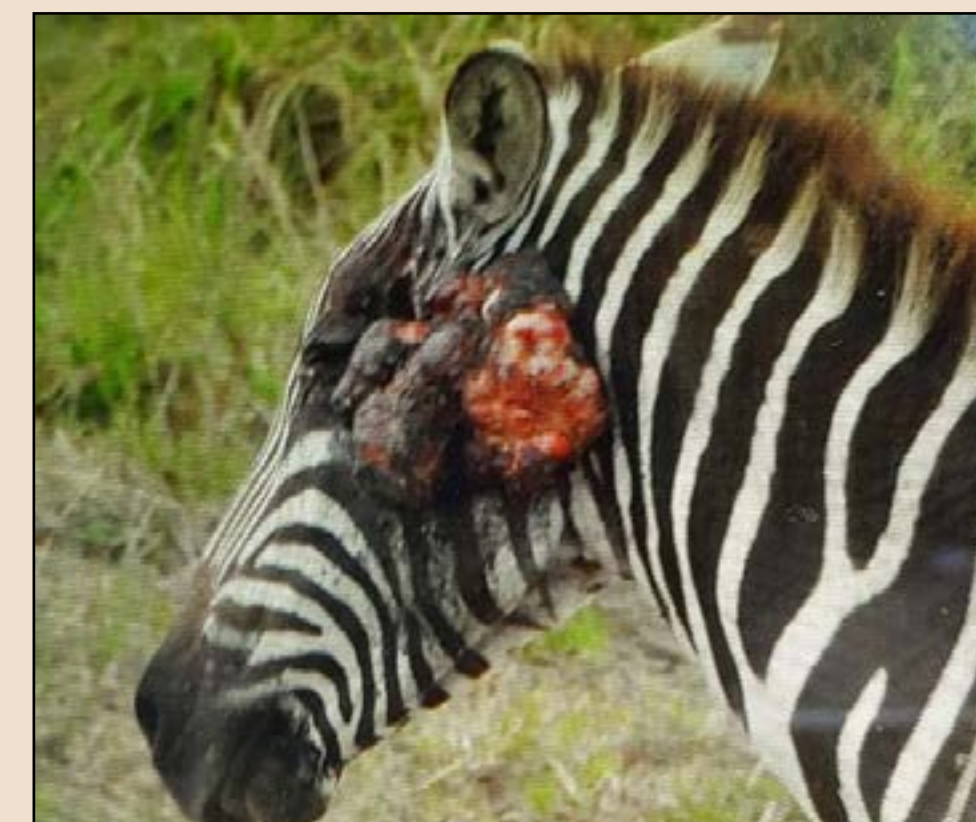
EFFECTS OF POLLUTION

If we do not take action now, wetland pollution will be a major reason for the extinction of Nairobi National Park in the future. Sewage sludge contains manmade chemical toxins and poses a serious threat to wildlife health as well as plant life.

Pollution leads to Eutrophication - the continued accumulation of nutrients such as nitrogen resulting of algal blooms in our wetlands depleting the amount of oxygen available in the wetlands. It also decreases the amount of light penetrating in our water bodies. Aquatic species will therefore die of suffocation as a result.

Industrial waste contains heavy metals such as lead and mercury. The release of these chemicals will have a negative impact on animal's health and the general food web. Accumulation of Carcinogens will lead to development of cancer in animal cells and tissues.

Plastic wastes destroy the aesthetic view of our parks and it's detrimental in the digestive system of wildlife when ingested.



A Zebra with a TUMOUR yet to be identified- (photo credit-unknown)


CONTROL MEASURES










FoNNaP has addressed the pollution case by various approaches; social media sensitization to create awareness to the general public, we have also written official requests to relevant authorities such as NEMA and the County governments. Consultation with KWS is ongoing to ensure that the mentioned culprits respond positively in accordance to the Kenya's environmental policy.

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“Why do you like to travel ?“

I have always been an outdoor enthusiast. Whenever I visit a new place, I have always wanted to see and explore the uniqueness of the place. To see how life functions, whether human, or natural life, in other places is really humbling. I have been fortunate to explore Kenya’s tourism products such as the majestic wildlife, the magnificent white sandy beaches at the coast, enriched cultures, spectacular views of waterfalls, lakes among others. Among my memorable trips especially earlier on in the pandemic was visiting Nairobi National Park. I had not been to the only National Park in a city in the world. At the time we were on a lock down and no one could leave Nairobi.



One of my favorite hiking trips was visiting Castle forest and waterfall at the slopes of Mount Kenya. The waterfall is really beautiful. It is very high up and large volumes of water would hit the floor of the river causing a splash and water droplets cooling our faces. It was an awesome experience !

Traveling is really beneficial. For example;

- Traveling makes one a better person. When you visit new places, meet new people and learn new things, it will surely change your perspective on life. In fact, traveling can teach you tolerance, acceptance and humility.
- Traveling makes you happier. According to a study by Amit Kumar, Matthew A. Killings worth, and Thomas Gilovich from Cornell University, that money spent on doing something (called “experiential purchases”) will leave you with a longer-lasting sense of happiness than money spent on having something (called “material purchases”). The study says that “waiting for experiences tends to be more positive than waiting for possessions.” And, it goes on to say that “people derive more happiness from the anticipation of experiential purchases and that waiting for an experience tends to be more pleasurable and exciting than waiting to receive a material good.”
- Traveling near home or far has numerous benefits but sadly, most of this places are no longer those perfect photos on the web that makes us wish instantly that we were there above anywhere else in the world. Most nature trails and even rivers are full of litter. Litter comprising of soda cans, snacks wrappings, straws, serviettes to name a few. Why do people litter such beautiful places? People litter because they do not feel responsible for public areas like forests and parks. They usually litter outside their own neighborhood where their trash becomes someone else’s problem and they believe “someone else” -- a maintenance worker will pick up after them. The more they litter, the more it becomes a habit, and the worse these natural areas look.

We really need to appreciate the health benefits from spending an afternoon at a nearby park and the wonderful memories captured on our phones from our trips. Before we head out for a game drive or a picnic, we need to plan how we will safely handle our trash. Lets` carry an alternative trash bag or store our foods in reusable packages so that we do not produce waste.

Lets` all keep in mind to “take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time”, so we carry our own rubbish with us as well as litter that was left behind by former less conscious visitors.

Vivienne Sang is a digital content creator. She runs a YouTube channel known as “Where is Vivienne?”

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INVASIVE SPECIES

Kenya is one of many countries round the globe under pressure of invasive species in the protected or the conservation areas. Invasive species are either plants or animals that are alien, exotic and non-native in a certain area. They can be introduced accidentally or knowingly thus bringing a negative impact to the native species. They become native, having a devastating effect on other species and therefore it becomes a major problem that needs to be addressed sooner to avoid much loss.

In many cases, non-native plants are introduced with an aim of wood production, control of soil erosion and fodder for animals and others introduced accidentally or by natural calamities.

Kenya has several invasive plant species that have pose a threat to our conservation and therefore needs urgent actions.

To mention a few:

- Solunum Incunum(Sodom apple)
- Prickly pear(Opuntia spp)
- Lantana (Lantana camara)
- Mathenge (Prosopis juliflora)
- Parthenium hysteroporous

Threats of the non-native species

The alien species are a major threat to the environment and the general biodiversity in that it has the potential of outshining the native plants and replacing them hence altering the whole ecosystem and its functions.

Some of these alien species like Prosopis do not have the natural enemy in Kenya and East Africa, it has the potential of spreading rapidly from the original point and invade the surrounding.

These species when they occur in the natural ecosystem pose an impact of resource competition with the native or traditional plants. They compete for space, light, water and nutrients just to mention a few. Their roots can be deep hence taking in a lot of water and nutrients thus limiting the growth of native plants.

They can also be agents of diseases or disease transmitting pathogen that can result to death of native species or prevent the young.

They also pose a threat of biodiversity loss, disruption of the natural ecosystems and as a result the can outweigh their significance.

As a result of change in the function of ecosystem, these alien species can lead to alteration of nutrient cycling and hydrological system of the environment hence can lead to the issue of soil erosion.

Finally for species that are closely related to the alien species, it can lead to hybridization.

How do we prevent Invasive species?

Prevention is an act of stopping something from happening or arising. The invasive species can be prevented through;

- Creating public awareness on the threats of invasive species and importance of environmental conservation.
- Ensuring general cleaning of vehicles, hiking gears and other tools to avoid transfer of its seeds or part of it from one area to another.
- If you see it, report to the authority to be acted upon immediately.

How do we control invasive species?

It is always very difficult to control most of the invasive species because they bear fruits prolifically, their seeds germinate and grow very fast when they come in contact with moisture. Some when cut, their stems regrow rapidly hence the following is recommended;

- 1) PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT – This involves destruction of invasive species during the early stages and also imposing of laws that govern conservation and banning certain plants from entering the country or any conservation area.
- 2) REACTIVE MANAGEMENT – This basically involve the biological control where a habitat is being altered, introduction of pathogens and application of chemicals to control the alien species. It may also include mechanical methods of management where hand pilling, mowing and cultivation are done.

Commonly asked questions

Are all exotic species invasive?

No, actually only a small percent of introduced species ever become invasive. However, it is nearly impossible to predict which species will become invasive and new species are being introduced every day. Some species are present for many years before they exhibit invasive characteristics. Many invasive species go through a “lag phase” in which their populations grow slowly until they reach a size large enough for the population to explode and/or become adapted to the local environment and become invasive.

How do invasive species get here?

Invasive species are introduced through many means. Intentional introductions have often been for agricultural or ornamental purposes. Once introduced, some of these species escape their enclosures or cultivation and can become established as viable populations. Accidental introductions are usually the result of contaminated freight or movement of contaminated wood products (including shipping pallets, bracing and other dunnage), plants, or food products. Individuals or propagules (including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagation) of these invasive species can be contaminants or hitchhikers in these shipments.

Timothy is a master student, Wildlife management @University of Eldoret.

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NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK



Njoroge Dennis Mwangi
Sir Lennie- 4th year student @Maasai Mara University

For the outshines of Nairobi County
Wildlife and nature our priority
Amaze with conservatory
The hurl animals enjoy
For the nature be our beauty

For the endangered we offer a home
Amazing birds of all kinds gain fame
Crocodiles, monkeys have no shame
Good shores and favorable shade
For the nature be our beauty

For our pride be global
Black and white are local
Bird melodies and snake hissings be our vocal
Giraffes and rhinos find epitome within the oval
For the nature be our beauty.

TREASURE IN THE WILD



Tamara Juma- 4th year student @ African Nazarene University

Nairobi National Park,
Protectors of the animal's hearts,
Together they strive for survival,
Man and his gun are their only rival.

Free and wild the animals roam,
In a place known to them as home,
Made of gold and stories told,
A stunning display to behold.

With all the color and the breeze,
Let us all be wary of the thieves,
Guard our treasures and our trees,
Conserve and co-exist with ease

For the generations to come,
Let them enjoy the world,
Full of green and beautiful sounds,
Of animals on the ground.

AESTHETIC NATURE

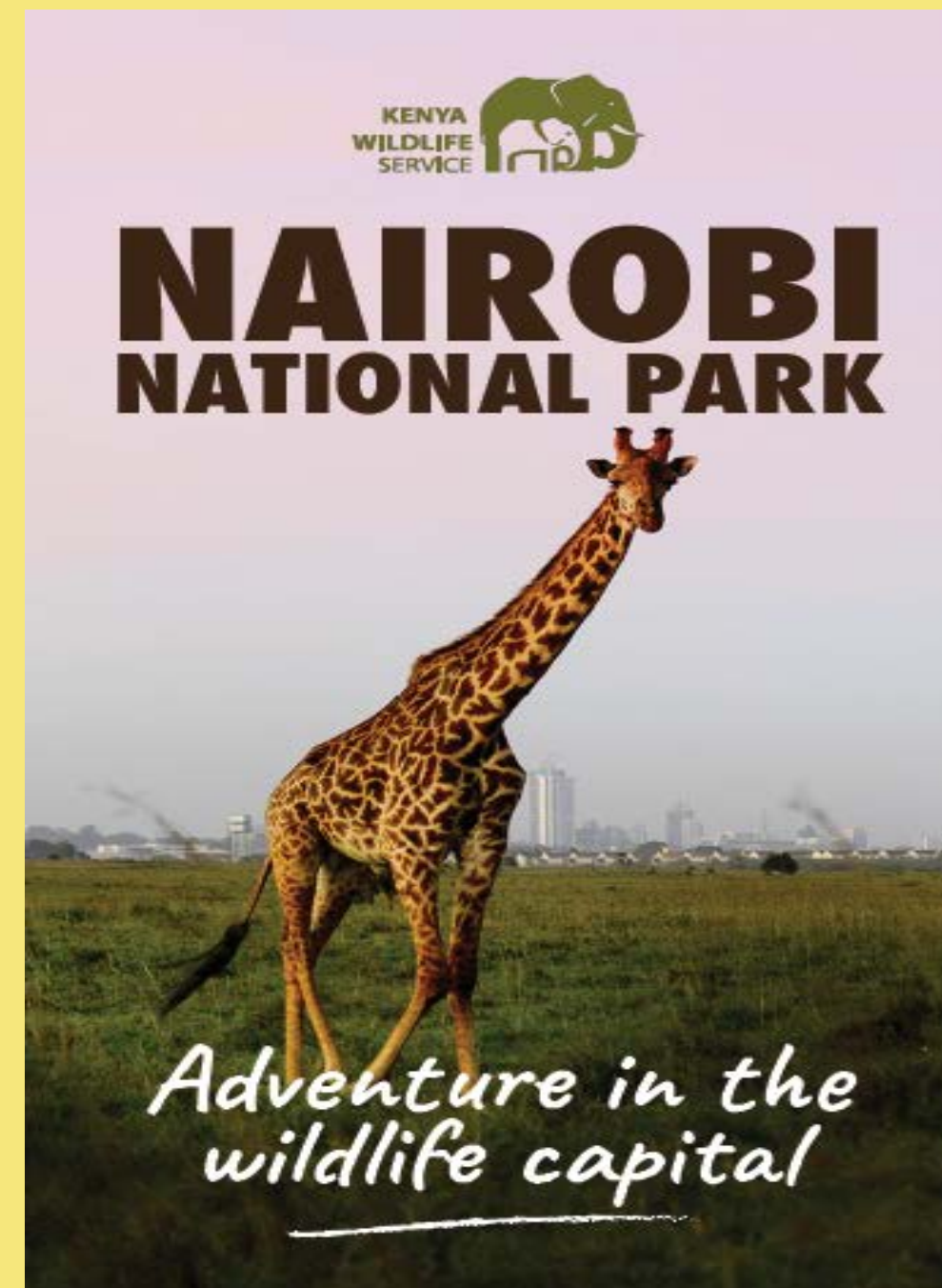


Sophia Kaberia. 4th year student @Maasai Mara University

Feeling the sweet fragrance of wild flowers
The taste of the wild fruits
The melodic sounds of the birds
The roar of the lion and the cry of the giraffe
I lose the energy to pollute the environment

When I think of the stream burbling
The howling wind sounds
The crashing and swelling of sea sounds
and the free psychotherapeutic seasons by nature
I lose the strength to pollute the environment

When It hits, Rivers don't need us to flow,
Trees don't need us to sway
The wild don't need us to survive but
We need them to exist
Then my strength to protect the environment is renewed



Friends of Nairobi National Park

New Updated Maps of Nairobi National Park

Map of Nairobi National Park

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FoNNaP JULY ACTIVITIES

10TH AND 11TH JULY MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

FoNNaP JULY ACTIVITIES

PARTHENIUM PULLOUT ON 17TH JULY



Photo credit- FoNNaP Office

Photo credit- FoNNaP Office



Photo credit- Dr. Elizabeth Migongo

Gareth Jones





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NEW MEMBERS SECTION



My name is Eliab mugambi I am currently working with MOUNT KENYA TRUST Doing conservation and protection of wildlife as a COMMUNITY RANGER. Felix introduced me to FoNNaP and I am happy being here because I love nature and all that it entails. I chose to work for nature by ensuring that we loose no elephants to poaching mainly for tusks and other small animals for bushmeat consumption or bushmeat trade. NNP is one of the best parks attracting local and foreign tourist making me feel so good being here and looking forward to visiting NNP very soon.



My name is Maina Hadson Kihara, a fourth year student at MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY OF KENYA currently pursuing a degree in Procurement and Logistics Management. Protecting plants and animals species has been a motivation to me and it is of great importance since we're all of the same world. We have to protect wildlife and preserve them for future generations to prevent animals we love from being distant memories. To achieve this, my friend and classmate Migwi Janifer introduced me to FONNAP, an organization protecting the world's most unique urban wildlife habitat, Nairobi National Park. I see myself volunteering, donating and speaking up for the betterment of our wildlife and their habitats.



My name is Mutheu Muange, and I am currently in my last year at Hillcrest Secondary School. I came to learn about FoNNaP through my friend, Ryan Nduma. After being told about the various activities the members engaged in, I began to admire FoNNaP and how hard they worked to protect and conserve the biodiversity at NNP. Now being a new member of FoNNaP, I've had the opportunity to experience the park for the first time and learn so much about it's beautiful ecosystems and about wildlife conservation. As someone who is hoping to study Environmental Sciences and Resource Management in university, I'm beyond grateful to FoNNaP for teaching me so much and helping me expand my knowledge on those areas. I believe that the movement to protect the biodiversity at NNP is vital for future generations to be able to experience and enjoy it's beauty. I am honoured to be a part of such a dedicated and passionate team.



NEW MEMBERS SECTION



My name is Joseph Kaniaru. I am a 4th year student at Maasai Mara University pursuing a degree in Criminology.

I was particularly interested in geography and history while in high school. That is where I learned that there is a national park in Nairobi, my curiosity led me to read more about how the park came to be. I resolved to visit the park one day.

My chance came after High school when I heard that the wildlife club in my university was planning for a trip to the Nairobi National Park, Thanks to Felix for leading us.

I quickly grabbed the opportunity and paid up. On the material day, the university bus made its way to the park by 10 am. This gave us a unique opportunity to enjoy the wildlife the whole day.

There were plenty of animals. Giraffes towered above the bushes, buffaloes grazed nearby, I also saw a number of ostriches and waterbucks. As we left the park we gathered and had a brief by KWS on the challenges facing the park.

As I left Nairobi National Park that day a question was ringing on my mind, 'Why would someone want to replace such beauty with concrete?'

Thank you Felix for introducing me to the organization that is saving NNP for future generations.



My name is John Migwi I am final year student of Multimedia University of Kenya ,I have always had an interest in nature and conservation of wild life ,there is no denying that we, people, have an obligation to ensure we not only stop our damaging ways but look to increase wildlife population and strengthen the habitats they rely on. Joining FoNNaP, has given me an opportunity to make an impact by raising awareness of our unique status of Nairobi National Park. It is a great responsibility to save the wildlife as we're ensuring that future generations can enjoy our beautiful Nairobi national Park and the incredible species that live within it . I feel honored to be part of the Society of Friends of Nairobi National Park



PHOTO CREDIT- Aria Wanjiku (7 years)

MY EXPERIENCE PARTICIPATING IN THE FoNNaP GAME COUNT EXERCISE

Hi, my name is Aria, today I will be talking about my experience participating in the game count at Nairobi National park. My dad, who is a member of FoNNaP asked me to join him at the game count and asked that I wake up early at 5:30 am to be able to be at the Park at 5:45 am. We got to the park gate and waited for FoNNaP officers to give us directions of where we were to do the game count in the Park. Once we got our sheet which would help us know which animals we would see as well as a record sheet to list the number of animals we would see, we drove into the National Park. We spotted different types of animals, Zebras, Elands, Ostriches, Impala, Gazelles and a Secretary bird. We had to drive through some bumpy areas and there was a lot of dust as we drove along. After we had finished counting, we drove back to the gate to give in our sheet. As we were about to leave my Dad went on social media, they had posted they found a cheetah, so we went back in, the cheetah was in Kingfisher. When we reached Kingfisher, we didn't see the cheetah, it was too far to be seen. So we went to KWS Club to get some food. When we got there they said they had to cook so we left. When we got home my dad went on Social media and they posted that the cheetah was on the road. I had a lot of fun and I would love to come back for another game count.

By Aria Wanjiku – 7 years

WILDLIFE FACTS FOR KIDS

Historically, Wildlife referred to non- domesticated wild species. Today wildlife has included plants, fungi and other living organisms that can thrive in an area without human intervention. Wildlife domestication occurs in many places across the world especially when people keep animals as pets. Pet keeping has both positive and negative impacts on the environment. It is easy to find wildlife in all ecosystems; forests, grasslands, and deserts. Other forms of wildlife can be found in the cities especially the bats and vultures. It is the responsibility of man to protect wildlife for future generations.



PHOTO CREDIT- Seyan Hirani



PHOTO CREDIT- Seyan Hirani

KIDS POETRY SECTION

If you view the world with the lenses of a child, you will actually enjoy the amazing beauty of mother nature. Children are fascinated with all types of animals. Be it the birds flying, animals in zoos, the squirrels at their backyard or even the big five. Game viewing gives young kids a memory that lasts a lifetime

***The Eagle*
Alfred Lord Tennyson - 1809-1892**

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

FROM NOW ON FoNNaP NEWSLETTER WILL HAVE A KIDS POETRY SECTION.

KINDLY SUBMIT YOUR POEMS TO FONNAPNEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM

NNP MAMMAL SIGHTINGS

NNP MAMMAL SIGHTINGS



Khushilthahirani
PHOTO CREDIT- Kush Hirani



PHOTO CREDIT- Jonathan Pereira



PHOTO CREDIT- Daljeet Kaur



PHOTO CREDIT- Irene Juma



Sonia Varma
PHOTO CREDIT- Sonia Varma



PHOTO CREDIT- James Wahome



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PHOTO CREDIT- Mutheu Mwangi



PHOTO CREDIT- Jonathan Pereira



Khushilthahirani
PHOTO CREDIT- Kush Hirani

FONNAP UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	DATES
7/31/2021	WORLD RANGERS DAY
AUGUST	INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL
10/8/2021	WORLD LION DAY
22/9/2021	WORLD RHINO DAY
SEPTEMBER	INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL
4/10/2021	WORLD ANIMAL DAY
OCTOBER	INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL
16/12/2021	NNP 75 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

BIRD SIGHTINGS

OTHER NNP SIGHTINGS

SHAZIR VIRJI



PHOTO CREDIT- Shazir Virji



PHOTO CREDIT- James Wahome



PHOTO CREDIT- Creative Basket Africa



PHOTO CREDIT- Daljeet Kaur



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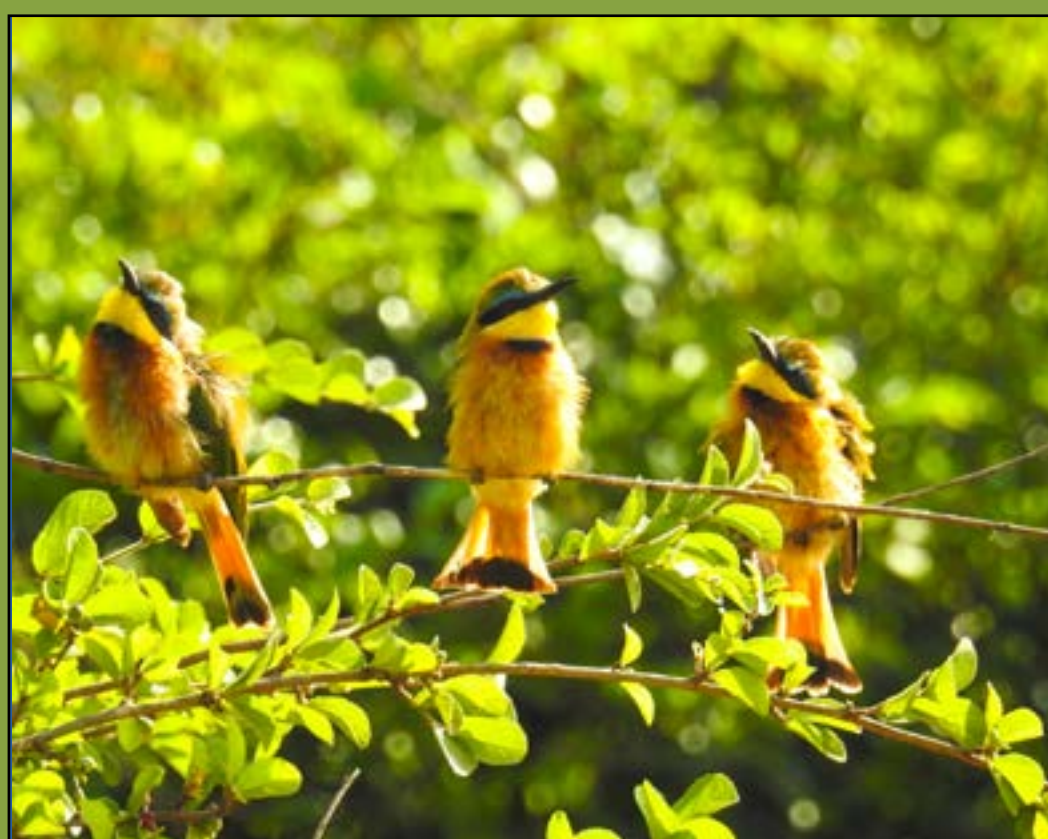


PHOTO CREDIT- Daljeet Kaur



PHOTO CREDIT- Jonathan Pereira





NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK NEWS

FONNAP IS A NON- PROFIT MEMBERSHIP SOCIETY FOUNDED IN 1995 DEDICATED TO HELPING KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE (KWS) TO NURTURE AND PROTECT BIODIVERSITY WITHIN NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK, AND THE BROADER ECOSYSTEM TO WHICH THE PARK BELONGS.

Join today and be a friend of the park.

CONTACT US

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