



FRIENDS OF NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK FONNAP

September 2022,



NEWSLETTER


Areef Photography

Stories make memories, there is no greater agony than bearing an untold story. Each story is different, there's always somebody listening.



This newsletter is a great way to update everyone around Nairobi National Park (NNP) about the latest happenings. You can use it as a source of relevant information, updates, and all about NNP. The newsletter is always available and within reach. We appreciate our readers' eagerness to make this better and more interactive. Share articles with strong messages to our email fonnapnewsletter@gmail.com. Thank you to our photographers for their continued support in marketing the Park worldwide. Through photography, we can tell untold stories, history is preserved, and the future has been predicted. Your photos have always complimented the stories we want to tell.

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Upcoming Events



FRIENDS OF NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK



NNP ANIMAL CENSUS TRAINING 1st October 2022, 2pm @ KWS Hqs

Areas of training:

- Map reading and circumnavigation
- Use of GPS/Geo-map Google App and binoculars
- Animal Identification
- Filling in the data sheets
- Block identification
- Punctuality and reliability



For more information call: +254 723 690686 or email: fonnap1@gmail.com



THE FUTURE OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN KENYA

SATURDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER @MATBRONZE CAFE

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE STATUS OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN KENYA AND THE TRANSFORMATION WE SHOULD EMBRACE TO SAFEGUARD OUR HERITAGE BY EXAMINING THE MAIN CHALLENGES FACING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION & THE STRATEGIES THAT ENHANCE THE CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Register, **0723690686**,

fonnap1@gmail.com

5.30 pm- registration

6 pm- talk

Cost: Proceeds will go towards supporting control of Invasive species in NNP

Ksh 1000 (talk +drink)- Members

Ksh 1500 (talk+drink)- Non Members

Payment

Mpesa Buy Goods Till Number 275211



David Western - Founding member, FoNNaP

A researcher, writer, Former Director Wildlife Conservation Society, Former Director Kenya Wildlife Service, Chaired the African elephant and Rhino specialist group, Patron of the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya

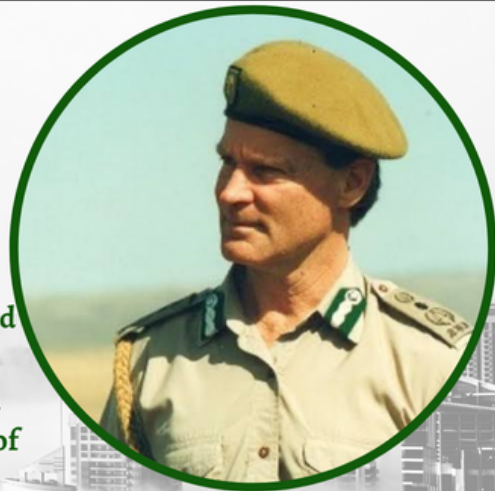
CONTACT 0723690686

WHO IS DAVID WESTERN

A former Director, Kenya Wildlife Service, pioneered Community based conservation. In 1967 he began his research and conservation work in Amboseli & never looked back.

He led Wildlife Conservation Society programs internationally, Chaired the African Elephant & Rhino specialist group, was the founding President of The International Ecotourism Society, and founder of African Conservation Centre in Nairobi.

David is also a founding member of Friends of Nairobi National Park (FoNNaP) & the Patron, Wildlife Clubs of Kenya



to attend the talk by David on 24th Sep

@Matbronze, Contact person 0723 690 686

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Membership Meeting Update



Photo credit: Bud Crandall

On a misty morning, our members came together to present ideas, thoughts, and concerns surrounding the national park and how we can contribute to its enhancement. The discussion majored on our current financial situation and updates on our reserve, operational, and project accounts. It was emphasized that we need more membership drives and corporate members to support FoNNaP, as it would be ideal if operating costs were covered for six months or more.

Several Questions and concerns were raised by the members. One noteworthy matter raised was the difficulty of keeping existing members. Therefore, to ensure members renew their membership, we must continue to give them a reason to support us. On this point, the board highlighted the importance of creating a clear strategy and goals that all members can align with and feel part of a specific purpose. On this note, certificates were then awarded to our corporate members.

Finally, our guest speaker, Assistant Director (AD) of Nairobi National Park, Mr. Ongwae Vincent, briefed the members on ongoing infrastructure in the national park, the importance of effective management, and the issue of pollution and security was also raised. The AD emphasized that the Park Management Committee's goal is to coordinate with stakeholders, mobile resources and oversee the implementation of plans are no different from the management plan. Hence, FoNNaP members and KWS agreed that we must work as a team to protect and serve the national park, and in his words, we should expect his "total support as we make conservation more successful."

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Nairobi National Park Management Plan 2020-30 Links

SPECIAL ISSUE



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Nairobi National Park Management Plan, 2020-2030

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HzXZ3bT4UKQV1U-RmVYUMv4MNOkp7NRG/view>

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My Conservation Internship Report

by Brenda Kajuju

An intern's experience

Nairobi national park is a gem of its own kind in the world as it is a destination to many to witness its uniqueness. Friends of Nairobi national park take tremendous initiatives to ensure that the park is kept alive and preserved for future generations to appreciate what nature gives back when taken care of. They involve in activities like; conservation education, game counts, human wildlife conflict mitigation, advocacy, clean ups, biodiversity research and invasive species removal in the park.

Being a member of FoNNap, I have seen their great work hence I chose to work with them so as to enrich my knowledge in the field of conservation. I have been working along with the administrative assistant as well as playing part in the role of day-to-day activities of the organization. My responsibilities have been office work like filing, summarizing monthly accounts for auditing, writing reports, doing photocopy, and also membership recruitment. I was also able to write proposals and have a chance to visit the park when having events related to conservation. Taking kids to the field and educating them about wildlife and the need for protection. As a student at Kenyatta university pursuing a bachelor degree in environmental planning and management, it's a great win for me. Doing what I love in conservation and also enriching my professional background is a thing to be proud of. Throughout my internship period I have really encountered and learnt a lot of new things and expounded to my knowledge as far as conservation and office work is concerned. It has not been an easy period, but never easy until you give it a try. Being part of Friends of Nairobi national park I have endorsed both informal and formal knowledge to which will serve me in my future field of conservation. I have been able to learn planning, communication, marketing and office management skills.

All my endeavors at Friends of Nairobi national park have been a great success for my internship period. I really appreciate FoNNap at whole for giving me the opportunity to grow and flourish in my career and conservation passion. I have been doing membership drives to recruit new members to the conservation field. It has been a great job done and would wish to participate more on that. I would also appreciate to give a hand in all the work concerning conservation when needed as I still continue learn. Participating in most of Friends of Nairobi national park activities and projects is a thing I look forward to as I grasp more and more to add to what have been doing during the internship period. In a nutshell, it has been enormous working with Friends of Nairobi national park. I confidently admit that I have been impacted fully on my aspirations as per when I was getting to work with you. I appreciate as I look forward to work more with you in the conservation of our great park.

- Brenda Kajuju



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The River Horse!

by Gareth Jones

Hippos in Nairobi

Some years ago, it was getting late on a cloudy day and almost becoming evening, and being tired after a long day, I rode slowly but purposefully through the park, not really putting extra effort into looking. Then suddenly a huge shape appeared from behind a bush on my right, it was a hippo feasting on the lush green grass that had grown after the recent rains.



Clearly, the Hippo was not amused that “dinner” had been interrupted, and made short hippo grunts while running in half circles and then turning towards me, as if to say “come on, move away and leave me in peace!” Well, I did listen to the hippo’s “body language” message and left the massive beast to feast into the night.

On another occasion, early one morning I drove through the Langata Forest, on a chilly dull overcast day. Suddenly a huge shape appeared in an open area on my left, it was a hippo lying down resting, no doubt after a night of feasting on the lush green forest grasses due to the recent good rains. The hippo lay still for a few minutes but then stood up as another vehicle passed next to me, looking at me with an almost smiley bemused expression, the huge hulk of a hippo slowly turned and retreated into the thicker bush. Wow! what a great and unusual sighting to see such a “surprise guest” in the forest. I thought for a moment, how ironic it was that the hippo appeared to be “smiling” as a “hippo on the go”, while in fact, it is a very dangerous animal. A humorous thought came to my mind, “when considering that hippos are so very large and fat and all they feed on is vegetation, then Hippos are a living proof that the salads are fattening “Ha ha Ha”. The word Hippopotamus comes from the Greek and it means River (potamos) Horse (hippos). In some languages, the name has been translated to “river horse”. In ancient times the hippopotamus was known to the Greeks and Romans as the “Beast of the Nile”.

The Hippo needs to resurface every 3 – 5 minutes to breathe. The process of surfacing and breathing is automatic, and even when sleeping underwater a hippo will emerge and breathe without waking. Hippo bulls can weigh well over 1,500 kg, they are the third biggest animal in Africa behind the elephant and rhino, and can run on land at speeds of up to 30 km per hour. Combine this with their aggressive nature, agility in and out of the water, and sharp, close to 500mm long teeth in enormous jaws and you can understand why hippos can make for such a fearsome creature to encounter.

Friday 18th of June 2010 was an interesting day, 3 lions had been eating on a buffalo carcass at the water’s edge of the Eland Valley Dam. When I arrived at the dam, the lions were sitting quietly on top of a mound, and the hippos were deep in the water, with the buffalo carcass visible on the opposite bank of the dam. I sat and watched them for some time, eventually, the Hippos began to move towards the buffalo carcass.

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The River Horse (continued)

The hippos came out of the water and stood over the carcass, from a distance it was difficult to see exactly what they were doing, but they appeared to be licking/muzzling the carcass on quite a few occasions. I then moved closer to the buffalo carcass by taking the backtrack past the dam wall, as I stopped the hippo retreated into the water, so I sat quietly and waited. After some time, the lions began to move towards the Buffalo carcass (a lioness with 2 sub-adult cubs), they each ate briefly on the carcass, and I could see they were all very full from the feasting.



Then the hippos began to advance while the lions were at the buffalo carcass, they boldly came out of the water, and the lions immediately timidly retreated. The Hippos then repeated the cycle of licking & muzzling the buffalo carcass. It was again difficult to see from where I was parked because the carcass was on the water's edge and partly hidden by the bank, but I observed the hippos' tongues licking the carcass. A truly fascinating event to witness, however, this did get me thinking. Firstly, how did the buffalo die on the edge of the dam? Was it alone at the time? Was it weakened so that a single lioness with 2 half-grown cubs could kill it? Did it die of another cause at the water's edge? It's hard to tell, then also the actions of the Hippos were really amazing and very rare to observe. Perhaps they were trying to get mineral nutrients like body salts etc from the buffalo carcass? Hippos are not known to eat meat. What is particularly amazing is the location of this natural event in the Nairobi National Park, which was at the Eland Valley Dam less than 1km from the park boundary, near Nairobi megacity.

Nairobi National Park has hippos in various dams and in the Mbagathi River. If people sometimes sit quietly at a dam where hippos are present, they often start to perform as they cavort in the water. Sometimes, small babies can also be seen. Even though hippos can look somewhat comical at times with green vegetation material on their heads, and we sing funny songs like "Mud, mud glorious mud, nothing quite like it for cooling the blood", in reality, Hippos have a nasty reputation in Africa. This is mostly because of their aggressive nature when they are out of the water feeding, while people are collecting water in the early morning or late afternoons.



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The River Horse (continued)

The situation has become particularly tense in some parts of Africa where human populations have increased and water resources have decreased. With so many dangerous animals in Africa, many people often overlook the fact that hippopotamuses as a species are actually the biggest killers of humans out of all the large African animals. Although hippos are herbivores, these highly territorial animals are estimated to kill well over 500 people each year in Africa. Hippo bulls fiercely defend their territories, which include the banks of rivers and lakes, while females hippos can get extremely aggressive if they sense anything getting in between them and their babies, who stay in the water while they feed on the shore.

The ‘yawning’ that Hippos often display is actually meant to be a threat. Sometimes you will see a reddish tint from the skin of the Hippo. This is the body’s way of producing a type of natural sunscreen for protection from the heat. When it is coming off the body it is often mistaken for blood or for sweat but it isn’t either of them. Neither blood nor sweat, this secretion is a natural sunscreen that protects the hippo’s naked skin from the harsh African sun. Blood sweat is made up of two secretions: one red (hipposudoric acid) and one orange (norhipposudoric acid). The secretions serve two purposes, these highly acidic compounds inhibit bacteria (reducing disease) and absorb ultraviolet light (helping prevent sunburn and sun damage).

The average lifespan of a hippopotamus is between 40 and 50 years. Hippos are social and usually hang out together in groups of 10 to 30 individuals, but some groups may include up to 200 members. No matter how small or large a group, all hippo herds are led by a single, dominant bull. Many of these herds contain females, but bachelor hippos are allowed inside the community as long as they know to respect the bull hippo and not flirt with any of the females. Would you believe a hippopotamus cannot swim? You would think that an animal that spends a majority of its time in the water could swim, but hippos cannot. However, they can move underwater at a speed of 15 mph (8 km/h). So, you won’t be able to outswim them! A visit to the Hippo pools in the park is a worthwhile and rewarding experience, there is much to see there including birds, monkeys, and other species, but please do not venture alone, hippos are dangerous creatures, armed rangers will escort you. Yes indeed! the hippo is another amazing creation, indeed the “river horse” has a fearsome reputation throughout Africa.

- Gareth Jones



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The History of Nairobi National Park

by Leila Crandall

A Brief History

Nairobi National Park is one of the world's wildlife capitals, as it is only a short drive out of Nairobi's central business district. In the city's backdrop, one can experience a wide variety of wildlife amongst the grassy plains. As Nairobi grew and conflicts between humans and animals increased, animals were gradually confined, and eventually, the British colonial government set an area aside for a game reserve. However, it took time until the National Park became what we know it as today.

In the 19th century, the wildlife found in Kenya was an awe-inspiring spectacle for early European visitors. The abundance of wildlife was partly due to the devastating bovine pleuro-pneumonia and rinderpest in the 1880s that wiped most of the Maasai's stock, exacerbated by a deadly smallpox epidemic. Thus, with the creation of the Uganda Railway in 1899, an influx of European opportunists came to witness the spectacular wildlife. Unfortunately, this also entailed hunting exploits. To check the hunting exploits, in 1900, the London seat of the Administration agreed to set up an area where hunting would be prohibited, known as the Southern Game Reserve. Unfortunately, it never came to fruition until December 1946, when they formally inaugurated the Nairobi Royal National Park in law. Advocates such as Capt. Archie Ritchie and Col Mervyn, who championed conservation, played an essential role in ensuring the national park's creation. Conservation has become a critical part of Kenyan policy. On September 18th, shortly after Kenya attained independence from the British, Jomo Kenyatta pledged to preserve the country's natural resources. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) became a state corporation in 1989 with a mandate to save and manage wildlife in Kenya's protected and non-protected areas. And Vision 2030, the country's development program, affirmed the critical role of the environment in national development. Thus, conserving natural resources continues to be an important part of Kenya's goals.

Today, the park gives Kenya a capital tourist attraction and functions as the "lung of the city." The park has been the setting for many wildlife behavior, ecology, and conservation management studies. However, climate change, population growth, and inappropriate land use have caused a significant loss of wildlife habitat. Thus, we must find new solutions to solve new challenges!

- Leila Crandall



Photo: The Park entrance in 1960 (source: Wikipedia)

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Camps International Clean Up

by Vincent Ola Simel

Kids on an Ethical Journey Creating an Impact

During July, The Wildlife Foundation has been hosting kids from the United Kingdom who aim to make ethical journeys with impact. The kids have done several projects in the community and inside the Nairobi National Park. The kids installed lion lights in homes in the Naretunoi community conservancy to mitigate human-wildlife conflict. These high school kids paid for the lights themselves, reducing the burden of selling livestock to buy the predator deterrent for families. Lion light installation in Naretunoi conservancy. Soil erosion has been a challenge for several years now. Some parts of the conservancy are prone to erosion from different soil erosion agents. With the kids' help, sisal was planted to reduce the speed of surface running water which is the primary cause of the erosion.



Inside the Nairobi national park, the kids did hippo pools and nature trail maintenance. The kids ensured the paths were easily seen, from arranging rocks along the paths to slashing and cutting twigs. This ensures visitors to the park see crocodiles have a good experience. Painting and face lifting of the toilets at the hippo pool picnic site has also been done by the Wildlife Foundation in collaboration with the camps Kenya kids. The children volunteered to scrub, clean then paint the toilets under the supervision of a certified painter. Littering, especially along the river, has been a big problem for livestock and wildlife that depend on the river for water. The kids from Camps Kenya have helped collect the litter. For two weeks, a total of 3 tonnes was collected. The litter range from plastic to garments, metal, and glass. All this litter is then returned to the Wildlife Foundation, where it is sorted and taken to a recycling plant or government dumping site. Since the south of Nairobi Park is unfenced, wildlife moves in and out of the park into the community conservancy. Some of these animals are nocturnal and mostly move at night. With the help of camera traps, we can see different wildlife as they move in search of pasture.

- Vincent Ola Simel



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3Es Environmental Day 2022

by Melany Tupenoi Nteti

3Es Joins Key Stakeholders of Ngong Town

This year's theme for World Environmental Day (5 June) was "Only One Earth", which drew our attention towards playing our role effectively while living in harmony with nature. Having held several Climate Change Advocacy Workshops this year with our volunteers and various groups, 3Es Experience joined other organizations such as the County Government of Kajiado (Kajiado North Sub-county), Water Resources Authority, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Scout Association, Olepolos Social Justice Center and MultiMedia University in a Clean Up exercise at Ngong Town.

Why Ngong town? Ngong is a town near the Ngong Hills along the Great Rift Valley within Kajiado County. The word "Ngong" is a Maasai word derived from the word "enkong'u" meaning "the 'eye' of water" or spring from where Rhinos came to drink water. With Ngong being a water catchment area, it is important that the town remains clean because humans and animals depend on that water for domestic use and drinking. Clean Up exercise created opportunities

for us to educate the local community and the business community on the importance of Proper Waste Disposal and our role in ensuring the environment is taken care of. From our interaction, most people assumed it was the role of the government to ensure the place was clean and we are happy that we were able to change that mentality because the Environment is our individual responsibility. We should make use of the waste bins around us, instead of throwing litter around, and work together with our local government to protect and preserve our environments. A clean environment means that we are living in a space protected from disease causing organisms which in turn ensures our health is maintained.

- Melany Tupenoi Nteti, Volunteer-Digital Strategist, 3Es Experience Organization



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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

**PHOTO CREDIT:
KUSH HIRANI**



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SIGHTINGS IN NNP!

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Photo credit: Sumaiyah Yakub



Photo credit: Lucas Mboya

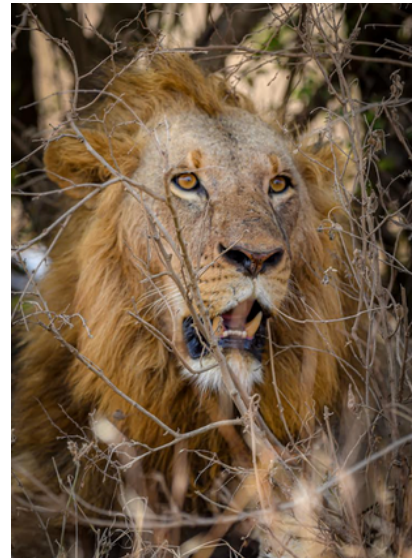


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Map of Nairobi National Park

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NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK NEWS



Sumaiyah Yakub

FoNNap is a non-profit membership society founded in 1995 dedicated to helping Kenya Wildlife Society (KWS) to nurture and protect biodiversity within Nairobi National Park and the wider ecosystem to which the park belongs.

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