

LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY

Newsletter number 18 October 2004

Introduction

The past six months since our last newsletter have been interesting with two issues that have raised their heads, previously unforeseen, unexpected and yet potentially extraordinarily disruptive towards the overall goals of the Conservancy:

Rhino Poaching and Land Claims.

The rhino poaching crept up on us all as a Conservation community, initially going unnoticed but once identified being resolved and dealt with in the most effective manner by a small and focused group of men. This was not within Lewa but in Kenya's most important rhino sanctuarie. Once we realised the severity of the challenge a group of Kenya Police Reserves from Lewa were put into the Sanctuary and after a mere five days managed to arrest (with adequate evidence to take to court) the three main perpetrators of these crimes. These individuals disclosed the entire mode of operation from killing these animals to the final sale of the horn. Credit for stopping this poaching rests squarely on the shoulders of the four security personnel who so skilfully unravelled and halted this situation. **The message that we can derive from this success is that never in our lifetime will rhino within East Africa be safe from the threat of poaching; this threat is current, real and pertains to every single rhino area in the region.** I cannot see free ranging rhino living outside the highest levels of protection ever being a possibility within the foreseeable future. With a mere 400 odd Black Rhino remaining within Kenya, every single animal is important and precious.

Over the past month the contentious issue of the Maasai people's rights to land that they perceive has been their historical home has also come to the fore. This has been an extremely sensitive and difficult time for all of those concerned from the Government to land owners to the Maasai themselves. This situation is not unique to Kenya and one that continually raises its head across the world. There is a genuine belief within the Maasai community that their forefathers signed an agreement granting use of their land for 100 years expiring this year. The Kenyan government has been quite clear that land titles are sacrosanct and although these agreements were in place there is subsequent legislation that supersedes the original agreement. As I write there is open and constructive dialogue between the concerned parties with the anticipation that the issue will be brought to the courts for a balanced conclusion. The relationship that Lewa has maintained with its direct neighbours has stood in good stead enabling us to maintain an open level of dialogue throughout this time.

Both of these situations clearly highlight the need for a strong and interactive community program and an equally strong and focused program for the protection of rhino. Conservation is increasingly becoming a holistic process incorporating politics, and people, yet the requirement for strong law enforcement where required. Both of these situations show how the investment of the past twenty years in establishing Lewa's conservation programme are founded on a solid base of committed people both within the Conservancy and across the world.

I thank you all for the faith that you have placed in our Organisation.

Ian Craig – Executive Director LWC



Giraffe in Mombasa town - see article on page 4.

Omni's sister

On 4th May 2004, Mawingo, the partially blind black female rhino gave birth to a female calf. Mawingo is 15 years of age and has given birth to four calves in her life at Lewa, two of which were killed, one by a hyena and one by a leopard. Her second calf, Omni, was adopted a few weeks after his birth. He is now five years old and now lives at Il Ngwesi, where he is the first black rhino in 30 years. Through fear of losing yet another calf, the little female calf was also adopted having been found alone two days after her birth.

The little rhino calf was named Tula by Alexandra Spencer. Tula is fed 2.5 pints of milk every three hours. Her milk consists of human baby formula (Nestlé's Nan 1) with added porridge, minerals and vitamins. Thank you to Nestle for their generosity in donating the milk for this little rhino. She has three keepers; Tonkaa, David and Yusuf who accompany her 24 hours a day. At night Anna sleeps with a blanket next to one of her keepers and refuses to go to sleep unless one of them is there.

We hope that Tula will eventually establish her own little territory on Lewa. Being a female she should be accepted willingly into our current black rhino population.

Lewa still has one black and five white rhino calves un-named.

If you are interested in our Name-a-rhino programme, please contact Sara Spendrup sara@lewa.org



Photo credits for Newsletter no 18; Melissa Duveen, Belinda Low, Richard Moller, Abbie Trayler-Smith, Tim Jackson and Nicholas Granier

Karibu

Geoffrey Chege!

We are very pleased to be welcoming Geoffrey Chege back into the research department this month! Geoffrey has been away in the UK for a year completing a Master of Science degree in Conservation



Biology with the Durrell Institute of Conservation & Ecology at the University of Kent. Although he felt the cold and found English cuisine somewhat questionable, Geoffrey thoroughly enjoyed his time, making good friends, acquiring new knowledge and sharing the experience of Lewa's approach to conservation in an international forum. We are very proud of his efforts and look forward to seeing his new skills applied to Lewa's research programme. His dissertation '*The effect of livestock density and forage availability on the distribution of Grevy's zebra in northern Kenya*' will be published on our website in December.
Belinda Low - Research Officer

Grevy's zebra status update

Following the workshop held by a Grevy's Zebra Interest Group in March 2004 at Mpala Research Centre, new figures for Grevy's zebra have emerged based on confident "guess-estimates", with minimum and maximum data quoted. The range in numbers of Grevy's zebra in Kenya is 1,600 - 2,000; in Ethiopia the range is only 100-150. Globally we are looking at only 1,700-2,100 animals left, representing an 86-89% decline over the last 20 years. As a result, the Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service endorsed the formation of a Grevy's zebra Task Force, which will address the conservation issues facing this species in Kenya as a whole. With community-owned land falling in the majority of the species' range, their involvement in a national Grevy's zebra conservation programme will be the key to its success. Read the proceedings of the workshop on our website.

Belinda Low - Research officer

A Road Trip to Northern Kenya

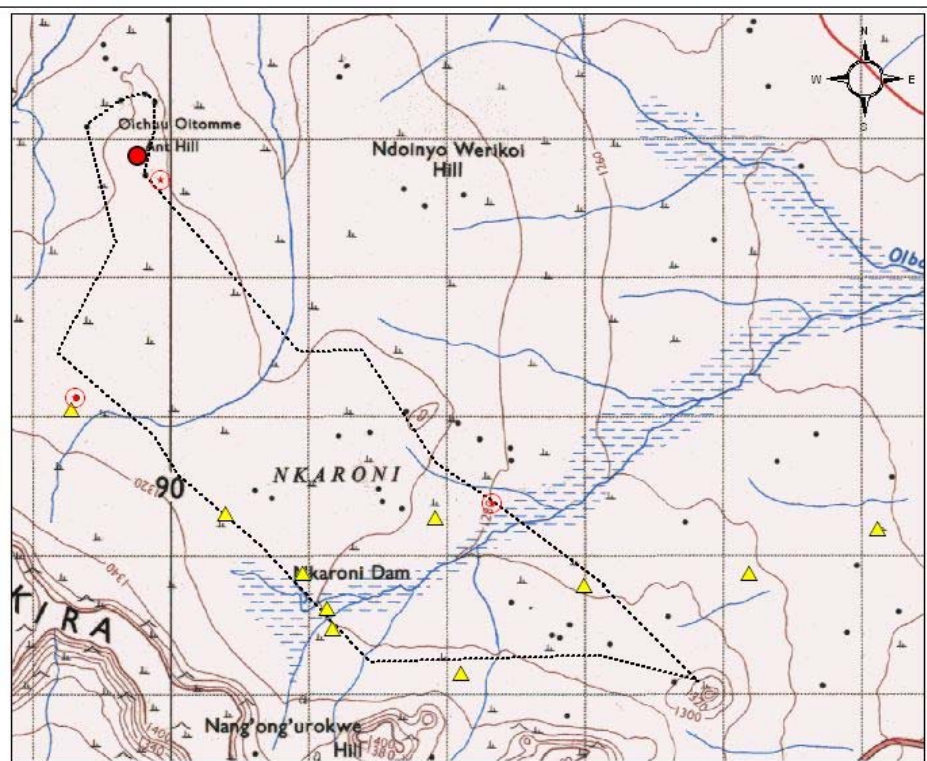
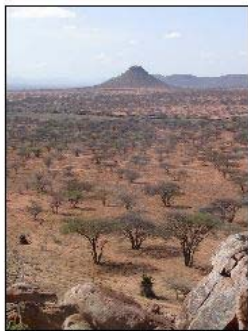
Last month, as part of the Grevy's Zebra Scout Programme funded by St. Louis Zoo, I carried out an assessment of each scout in-situ. I drove up through Ngutuk Ongiron (West Gate) and camped for ten days on the Lengusaka lugga with Nanyuki, a member of the Lewa security team, and Rikapo and Sikeli, two Grevy's zebra scouts. Every day we drove out to each scout and spent the day walking the usual circuits (av. 12km/day) made by the scouts as they herd their goats or collect firewood. I recorded everything I saw, including livestock, manyattas and wildlife and had the rare privilege of experiencing Samburu life first-hand.

I was extremely impressed by the ability of the scouts to sex and age the zebras without binoculars. Their procedure for recording data is to slowly approach the animals, obscure themselves behind a bush and just sit and observe. Only once they are sure

of the herd composition do they turn on their GPS and start filling in the datasheet. I did my own independent data collection of the same sightings and made a comparison: the differences were few and negligible, highlighting the validity of using community scouts to collect data and be directly involved in monitoring on the ground.

In total I saw an impressive 181 Grevy's zebra on these walked circuits. By the same token I also saw 5,489 assorted head of livestock (96% were sheep and goats) and very little other wildlife. The fact that in Samburu culture only animals with cloven hooves can be eaten has led to the preservation of these large herds of Grevy's zebra in the Samburu ecosystem. The more subtle pressure on the zebra is competition with livestock for grazing and water resources. It is anticipated that through the Northern Rangelands Endangered Species Programme (an arm of the Northern Rangelands Trust) this pressure will be alleviated through mechanisms such as alternative income generation, conservation management and outreach education. Already the NRESP has strong commitments from Saint Louis and San Diego Zoos and is establishing further links with other zoological institutions.

Belinda Low- Research Officer



0 1 2 Km

Created: Lewa Research Department
Base Map Source: AWF
Date: 27 August 2004

- No. Grevy's zebra sighted
- 2
- 3 - 16
- ★ Grevy's zebra carcass
- ▲ Livestock
- Route walked

Mombasa Giraffe Move:

Mombasa is not just the home to long white beaches, hotels, restaurants and topless sunbathers. Just a stone's throw away from the well-known tourist resorts on Bamburi beach there is wildlife to be found.

LWC has recently carried out a giraffe translocation in Mombasa! Yes there are giraffe in Mombasa, on Bamburi's Haller Park (Baobab Farm Ltd). In fact there are several different types of fauna and flora to be found in the Haller Park and if you are nearby a visit is highly recommended. Everything from giant Aldabran tortoises, crocodiles, eland, oryx to Rothchild's giraffe live in the park. Lewa, with the assistance of KWS, was contracted to move seven giraffe (three males and four females) from the Haller Park to Nguuni Nature Sanctuary, also owned by Bamburi.

The object of the move was to de-stock the Haller Park from 11 to four giraffe. Although the distance between the catch site and the relocation site was only five km, the transit route was totally different to that of which we are normally accustomed to. The challenge was one that we had never even dreamt of doing, as the picture portrays, with electricity lines, matatus, lorries, people, buildings, traffic jams and school children, all being a part of this very unusual, but fun move.

The exercise was very successful from all aspects and the entire team of KWS veterinary staff, Baobab Farm staff and LWC capture team could not have worked out better. There were no mortalities and to cap it all, one of the females moved gave birth two weeks later, topping the giraffe population in Nguuni Nature Sanctuary up to eight.

Richard Moller – Security and Wildlife Coordinator



Uganda Eland Translocation:

LWC were approached by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in May 2004 and asked to help them move 11 eland from Lake Mburu National Park, in the South of Uganda to Kidepo Valley National Park, to the far North East of Uganda – a distance of over 1,000 km over some very challenging roads. For this move, LWC provided three experienced men, led by Sumbere Toki (Lewa's main "capture man"), Simon Koskei and Joshua Ngila along with our nine-ton truck that carried a modified container used for wildlife transport and other game capture equipment and material. Eland numbers in Kidepo are very low and for this reason the UWA has begun a restocking program into Kidepo in an effort to boost the eland numbers there.

This translocation proved successful and let us all hope that the eland breed flat out and ensure that their numbers in Kidepo reach sustainable levels once again. I hope that this relationship between LWC and UWA continues to grow with our involvement in future translocations in Uganda.

Richard Moller – Security and Wildlife Coordinator

Sambu and Toki

Sambu, one of the orphan cheetah brothers was killed by a lion early in May this year. It was very sadly ironic that the event occurred on Simon King's last day on Lewa at the end of what had been a very successful project. Toki, the other brother, is fine, but was clearly confused for a while after the accident. The day had been a good one, with the boys killing a fawn in the morning, and a further kill in the evening, near the Wilderness Bridge, of a large impala fawn.

The cheetahs knew that area well, and were familiar with the lion activity there. They had finished feeding and went up towards the rocks to spend the night. We found tracks of a large male lion close to Sambu's body. He was killed instantly and left unmolested. It looked as though he died where he was attacked, and had not been carried, typical of lion aggression directed towards other predators.

Toki had lots of extra support from John and Stephen (the cheetah's caretakers) during the time after his brother's death, but he is now doing very well, living independently, and we often see him hunting successfully.

We feel though that Sambu's death was not a sign of failure of all our efforts. The chances of a wild cheetah living beyond its first year are much less than ten percent. Sambu led a rich and contented life, and was 2 years old when he died. By wild cheetah standards, he did well.

Toki continues to thrive on Lewa, and may, in time, join forces with other young males. We will continue to be in close touch regarding Toki's progress.

Look out for Simon King's documentary about the two brothers; Cheetah – the fast track to freedom, on the BBC's Natural World series in October, and on Animal Planet later in the year.



Ian Craig and Sambu

Lewa USA

It has been an eventful year for Lewa USA. Ian and Jane Craig arrived in April on a whirlwind "friend-raising" trip with gatherings in Dallas, Denver, San Diego, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Lake Forest, IL and Warrenton VA. Further trips are planned for September and October 2004

Funds raised by Lewa USA supports over 40% of the total general operating budget of the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. Due to their unqualified success, the past three years has shown an extraordinary growth in the Conservancy's programme and activities. In order to provide the financial support to ensure success in the field, Lewa USA has hired a part-time Development Director, Ben Duke. Ben lives in Elizabeth Colorado with his wife Laurie and their two children. In addition to operating a cattle and hay ranch, Ben brings over 20 years of experience in non-profit development to Lewa USA and we are excited to have him on board.

We would also like to introduce our newest Board member, Cina Alexander Forgason. Cina lives in San Antonio, TX with her husband Mark and their son James. Cina is a past Board member of The Nature Conservancy of Texas, the Brandywine River Museum and Conservancy, and Foxcroft School. They are both from ranching backgrounds and continue to be active in the ranching community today.

Helen Christian - Administrator Lewa USA

Friends of Lewa UK -update

Already happened;

What? - FoL Drinks and talk by Ian Craig

When? - Wed 12th May 2004

Where? - East India Club, St James's Square, London, UK

Who? - 120 pax

Note: Richard Britten - Long generously supplied Champagne

Fun was had by all, the ranks of Friends of Lewa grew

Upcoming;

What? -Friends of Lewa Dinner

When? - 23rd November

Where? - Skinners Hall.

Note -Rory Bremner will be doing a skit and Ian and Jane will be attending.

If you are interested please contact Sarah Watson at Tusk Trust sarah@tusk.org

Lewa Canada

Good news! We are working to create a foundation supporting Lewa in Canada. An application has been submitted to the Canadian government for review, and confirmation of our charitable status is expected in the first quarter of 2005.

This year we will host a fundraising dinner for the growing number of Canadian based donors on the 3rd of November, and plan to organize several strategic fundraising meetings as well as one or more presentations to schools with an interest in conservation.

We are most grateful to the Jane Goodall Institute for allowing Canadian donors to make contributions to Lewa through JGI Canada until our own foundation is approved. If you are interested in joining Lewa Canada please contact Alexandra Montgomery on alexandra@GARDINERMUSEUM.ON.CA

Lewa Austria and Switzerland

There are exciting events in Austria developing. As a result of Alexandra Dixon's friends and relatives, particularly Gabrielle Dixon we are looking forward to Ian hosting a reception in Vienna at the end of September and a visit from a group at the end of October. With the possibility of support in Switzerland as well through Monica Leuthy our support base is widening.

Lewa Clinic goes from strength to strength

The clinic over the past few months has just taken off. The laboratory is now finished. We only await the arrival of the new technician to finish off equipping it (we are interviewing for the position in September). A foundation in the US has recently announced the funding of a vehicle for the nurses and the patients, in addition to it being available for the now two venues for the mobile clinic. Lebarua community is still a regular stop and now the village at Sangaa is visited every two weeks.

We continue to be well supported by many donors and well wishers. Lucy Fowler raised a great sum in the marathon; Monica Luethy has established a network in Switzerland and Rob Norton has kindly contributed over \$9000. We have the prospect of an eye clinic in October provided by Dee Billiere and hopefully a dentist surgery in the New Year.

We welcome Rebecca Mukunya who has arrived full time to support Agnes on the staff as an experienced nurse.

David Parkinson - Deputy Director

Mutuni Irrigation Scheme

The 18 million-water irrigation project is finally complete and the community is currently applying overhead sprinkler irrigation. It's a dream come true as the community now have tap water on their doorsteps. Frigoken, a member of the Aga Khan Foundation is moved into the area and is training people on French pea farming for export. About 300 farmers have already planted the crop. The farmers are ready to get into the enormous economic venture.

James Munyugi - Community Development Officer

5th Annual Safaricom Marathon

In late June of this year Lewa was again turned over to the marathon. This year for the first time we filled our entry quotas before the actual race which unfortunately meant that some entries were turned down. Now in its fifth year, the Safaricom Marathon attracted a record 530 runners from 19 different countries including USA, Canada, Australia, China, Japan, Egypt, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa, France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark and Switzerland. Established as a fundraising event, the Marathon has now raised over US\$500,000 for the benefit a number of causes; the main beneficiaries being programmes focusing on education, community development, healthcare and wildlife conservation. This year we have distributed so far over \$203,003- another record!

This year by popular request we changed the course. The gruelling loop which marathon runners were forced to do twice was altered to include a second gentler loop out towards the eastern end of the Conservancy. Times came down to match the easier course.

Peter Ndegwa, a relatively unknown local runner, smashed the Safaricom Marathon record today by 6 minutes in a time of 2:19:01. Ndegwa was invited to run his third marathon at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy following his strong showing two years ago when he led the race. Second place went to David Kuino, who finished over a minute behind Ndegwa in a time of 2:20:09. It was Kuino's debut in the Safaricom sponsored event, which is now regarded as one of the toughest marathons in the world.

The women's full marathon was won for the third consecutive year by Callen Areba in a time of 3:02:09. However, local community runner, Lucia Mwinaki, from Matunda nearly produced a shock result by leading for much of the race, but was finally overtaken in the last kilometre by Areba.

So once again the marathon was supported by an ever willing group of volunteers – from the perennial water stop teams to the individuals who willingly gave up their time to help we are eternally grateful. Sarah Watson once again was seconded by Tusk to run the event and did so with her usual aplomb and professionalism.

David Parkinson – Deputy Director

Adult Literacy Education

The unparalleled success of the Lewa Education Trust has seen many youths now showing a tremendous change in their perception towards achieving their childhood goals. This is due to the education gained through Trust sponsorship. Apparently, the parents and the elderly in these communities have also shown an escalating interest in becoming literate. After identifying this need for an adult education programme, the new Literacy Education Programme was put in place to meet these basic needs, and now most of the communities are ready to get to class!

Faith Riunga - Lewa Education officer

Lewa's Mission Statement

“The Lewa Wildlife Conservancy works as a catalyst for the conservation of wildlife and its habitat. It does this through the protection and management of species, the initiation and support of community conservation and development programmes, and the education of neighbouring areas in the value of wildlife”.



Callen Areba and Catherine Ndereba running in the Safaricom Marathon 2004

Finance

The LWC Accounts for the eighteen months ending December 2003 were submitted to the Board of Directors in April 2004, having been audited by Price Waterhouse Coopers. The deficit of US\$ 355,638 confirmed our projections regarding the negative impact on our tourism earnings caused by international events during this period. Coping with this deficit while simultaneously fulfilling our conservation imperatives has been a challenge, but one to which we have risen. This has however necessitated some compromise and the area hardest hit was our capital replacement schedule with nearly US\$ 200,000 worth of our planned budget activity being deferred. This is of course only a very short term solution for having to operate an increasingly aging vehicle and equipment base will ultimately become a false economy as maintenance costs start to climb and operational effectiveness becomes compromised. Consequently, as we finalise the 2005 budget our primary concern is the financing of the postponed capital expenditure.

On a positive note, tourism earnings in the current financial year have been in excess of 20% above budget. Additionally, we are seeing renewed interest from both corporate and individual donors. Naturally, we remain deeply grateful to all our donor partners for their continued support. The fact that endangered species which are dwindling elsewhere are on a steady increase here on Lewa and neighbouring community areas, is our handsome dividend to all those who have been kind enough to support this worthy cause.

Isaac Njagi – Finance Manager

To continue as a proactive conservation organisation protecting rhino from poachers snares, encouraging conservation and development into new areas of North Kenya, Lewa needs a team. To be involved please visit our website www.lewa.org for more info on how you can play your part.