

already entirely unsuitable for gorillas. Two large tracts of Parc Albert on the Ruanda side have recently been returned to the natives unofficially.

Although the habitat today still appears to be adequate to support the gorilla population, the animal will in the future not be able to survive if its present destruction by Watusi cattle continues. Watusi and their cattle venture far into the Congo side of the park. A visit into the area between Visoke and Sabinio in July, 1959, showed countless old cattle trails and huts penetrating over a mile into the Congo. More recently in December 1959 and January 1960 several hundred cattle were noted from the Ruanda border as far as 4 miles into the Congo, north and north-west of Visoke. A deep, well-used cattle trail enters the Congo south-west of and at the base of Visoke. At present, habitat destruction by cattle is primarily confined to some sectors at altitudes below 3,000 meters. Although this is undoubtedly detrimental to the gorilla and other forms of wild life, an extension of this intrusion and an invasion into the Hagenia forest could well prove fatal to the perpetuation of wild life in the Virunga Volcanoes.

Elephant Attacks Photographer

A GERMAN photographer, filming elephants across the Nyamugasani river in the Queen Elizabeth Park had a remarkable escape. Contrary to regulations he had left his car and one of the elephants attacked him; he was pulled out of a bush in which he had taken refuge and thrown three times before the elephant left him. His only serious injuries were a tusk wound in the leg and a broken ankle. There is no doubt that he was an extremely lucky man and we hope that this will serve as a salutary lesson to others. Two villagers were killed just outside the park by a vicious wounded elephant which was subsequently shot. The malpractices of poachers, and the incompetence of a certain type of hunter often reflect upon innocent victims.

Elephant and Rhino

ANIMALS normally show a remarkable indifference when confronted by members of a different species, although in general other creatures allow right-of-way to the elephants. An interesting observation of a rhino meeting an elephant is therefore worth putting on record. They approached to within fifteen yards before becoming aware of each other's presence. The elephant then extended its ears and walked straight towards the rhino, which halted and raised its head. The elephant then made a charge and the rhino retreated backwards, lunging its head from side to side, puffing loudly the while. Another short rush by the elephant put the rhino to flight, and it disappeared at a gallop the way it had come. Later the two animals were again seen in the same area, feeding and unaware of each other's presence.

(Extracts from Report of Trustees of Uganda National Parks.)

The Queen Elizabeth Park of Uganda

Written and illustrated by

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RESUMING my brief account of our 1957 tour of African National Parks, I now come to the Queen Elizabeth National Park of Uganda.

Uganda is one of the most picturesque and charming of the Equatorial African territories. It is a large and varied area, of course, but much of it is carpeted with verdant tropical forest and similar vegetation: there are magnificent mountain ranges and escarpments, and all is clothed in a mantle of vivid green. It is a highly populated territory, and vast areas of native banana plantations, and the spectacular, immensely long horned Ankole cattle, blend harmoniously in many a landscape.

The Queen Elizabeth Park is, at time of writing, some seven hundred and sixty square miles in extent. It lies in the extreme west of Uganda, and adjoins the great Parc National Albert of the Belgian Congo. The area includes the shores of Lake Edward and Lake George, and just below the Safari lodge (as rest camps are called in East Africa) of Mweya runs the Kazinga channel which connects these two lakes. Two main roads pass through the park, and much of the area has been opened up by good motor tracks. The southern section of the Park, and the Maramagambo forest (where, if you are lucky, you may glimpse chimpanzees) can be reached by way of the new road to the Congo. Motor launches can be hired for trips in the Channel. The latest Report of the Trustees of The Uganda National Parks (for the year ended 30th June, 1959) indicates that a new camping site and entrance gate has been chosen on the banks of the Ishasha river, and chimpanzees are sometimes seen near the river. This new site and additional entrance were planned with a view to attracting an immense tourist potential from the holiday centres on Lake Kivu, in the Congo, but one wonders how present developments in the Congo will now affect this.

All those who are accustomed to visualise national parks in Africa somewhat on the lines of the Kruger National Park, or the Wankie National Park (in a scenic sense) will find something quite new awaiting them in the Queen Elizabeth Park. Here the greater part of the terrain is comparatively open grasslands, cropped fairly close by the game over much of it, varied and dotted with clumps of creeper-tangled bushes or scrub, and large numbers of candelabra-like Euphorbias. Actually this lack of dense bush is not a natural feature, but largely the result of former extensive bush clearing to eradicate Tsetse fly, as it was formerly a bad sleeping sickness area. Soil erosion problems have appeared in the wake of this bush eradication, but, at any rate, it certainly makes for easy game viewing.