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The Distribution of Some Large Mammals in Kenya.

by

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Introduction

Detailed distribution maps of wild animals play a useful part in the study of the ecology and status of the species concerned, and form a basis for comparison in future years. They are also a valuable aid to the sound planning of conservation and exploitation measures affecting wild life. The distribution maps of large mammals presented in this paper have been prepared as part of the programme of the Fauna Research Unit of the Kenya Game Department. They refer only to the distribution of the species within Kenya, although it would be desirable when possible to extend the work beyond this biologically meaningless boundary. We have dealt only with the pachyderms and the larger carnivores and antelopes; we have omitted some of the smaller members of the last two groups because we have as yet been unable to obtain sufficiently detailed information about their distribution. A complete list of the larger Carnivora (i.e. excluding the Mustelidae and Viverridae), the Proboscidea, Perissodactyla and Artiodactyla occurring in Kenya appears at the end of this paper. Those species appearing in brackets have not been dealt with in this paper.

The distribution maps are accompanied by four others showing:- (1) physical features, place names, and conservation areas; (2) altitude; (3) rainfall; and (4) vegetation. These are drawn from maps in the Atlas of Kenya (1959), with the gratefully acknowledged permission of the Director of Surveys, Kenya. The nomenclature used throughout this paper follows "Southern African Mammals" by Ellerman, Morrison-Scott and Hayman, 1953 whenever the species concerned is dealt with in this work, and otherwise "A Checklist of African Mammals" by Allen, 1939.

The present distribution of each species was originally plotted on 1 : 2,000,000 maps of Kenya divided into ten-minute squares. Within each square the presence or absence of the species was recorded. These original maps are kept at Game Department Headquarters in Nairobi and are constantly brought up to date as new information becomes available or the range of the species alters. On each map reproduced here the present range (July, 1962) of the species concerned is shown by solid symbols, which imply that the species has actually been recorded in the area indicated. On all maps, therefore, the maximum range of a species is shown - in many cases during long periods of dry weather the range becomes limited by the availability of permanent water or of food supplies. The hollow symbols indicate areas from which the species is known to have disappeared during the last seventy-five years.

The notes below each map indicate the present habitat preferences in Kenya of the species concerned, with reference to the vegetation map, and its approximate altitudinal limits. They also suggest reasons for any marked changes which are known to have taken place in the species' range or numbers during the last seventy-five years.

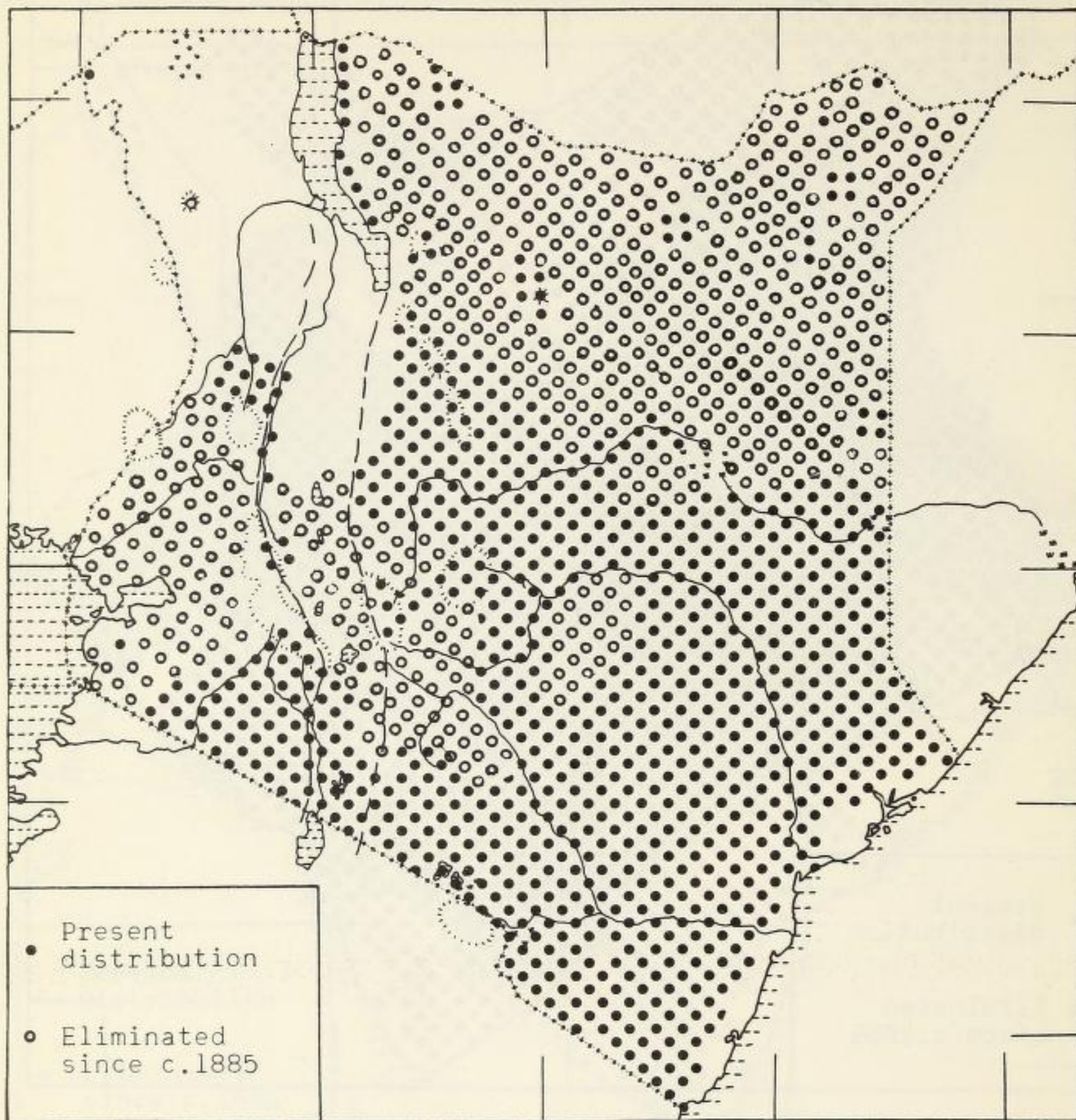
Information on present day distribution has been gained by our personal observation and by questioning reliable observers from all parts of the country. These persons, too numerous to name individually, include game wardens, honorary game wardens, National Parks'

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staff, white hunters, foresters, agricultural and veterinary officers, farmers and many others. Without their help the maps could not have been prepared, and we owe each of them a very great debt of gratitude for the time which they have spent on our behalf. We take, however, full responsibility for the information given and opinions expressed in this paper. The information on past distribution, which is necessarily less complete than that concerning the present day, has been obtained from the publications of travellers and naturalists, from the records of former members of the game department and persons resident in Kenya for many years and from the maps showing the distribution of East African fauna published by Roosevelt and Heller (1914). These are the only authors who have published maps showing the recorded occurrence and probable range of East African mammals. However, in the present paper we have only taken into account their actual records when mapping past distributions, as they point out in their preface that "owing to the vastness of the area covered and the lack of records for many of the species.. it has been necessary to map [the ranges] somewhat approximately."

NOTE: For reasons of space we have had to omit references to sources of information in the text of the paper, but a list of the principal literature consulted is given at the end.

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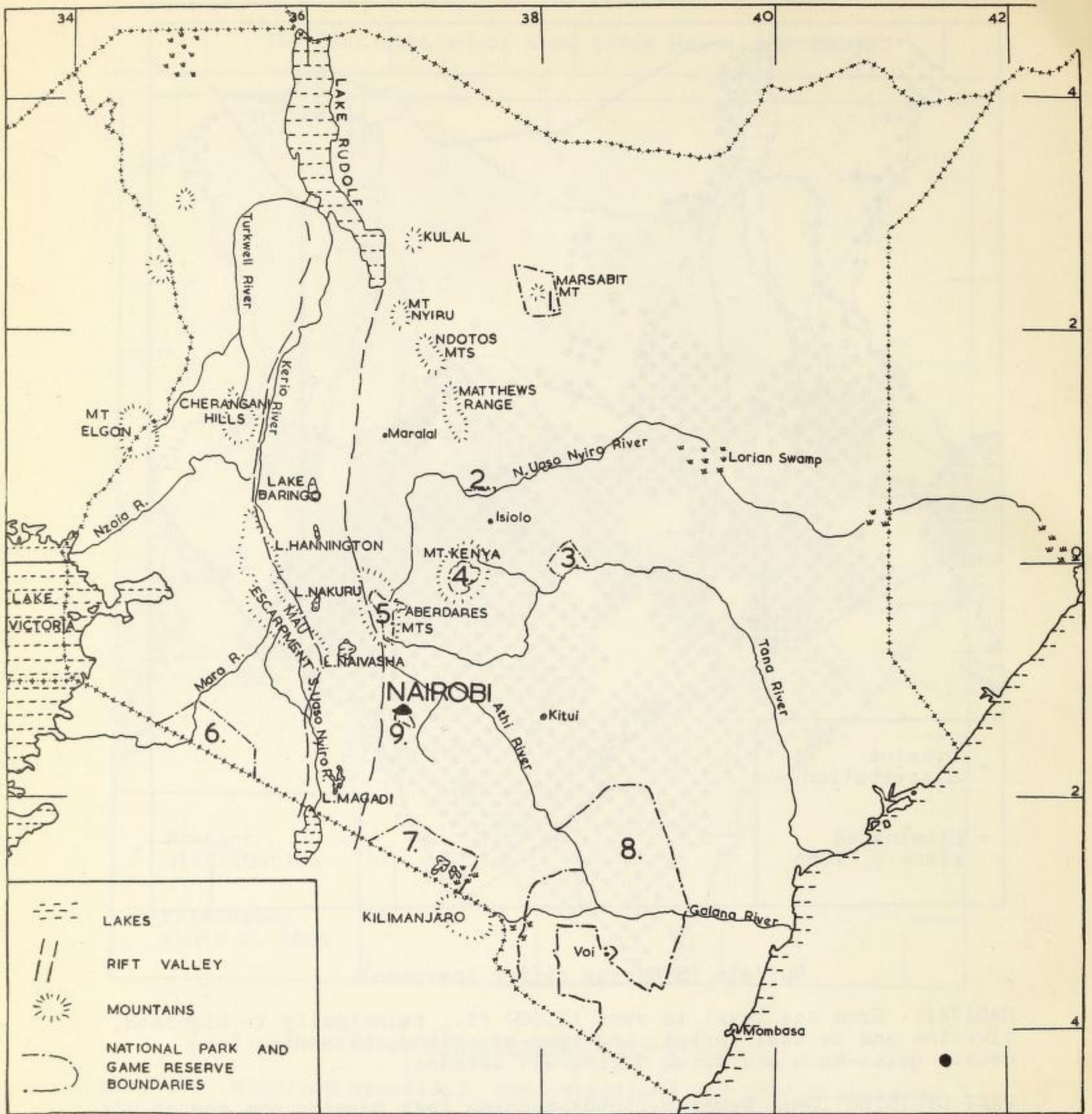


Black Rhinoceros (Diceros bicornis Linnaeus)

HABITAT: From sea level to about 12,000 ft., in all vegetation types where sufficient cover exists.

PAST DISTRIBUTION: This species has been eliminated from much of west and south-west Kenya by the spread of settlement and cultivation; it has also been eliminated from or greatly reduced in north-east Kenya and much of the Rift Valley by poaching. In south and south-east Kenya poaching and severe drought have effected a great reduction in numbers. Any lessening of the present degree of control of poaching would be likely to result in the rapid elimination of the species from all but a few parts of its range in Kenya.

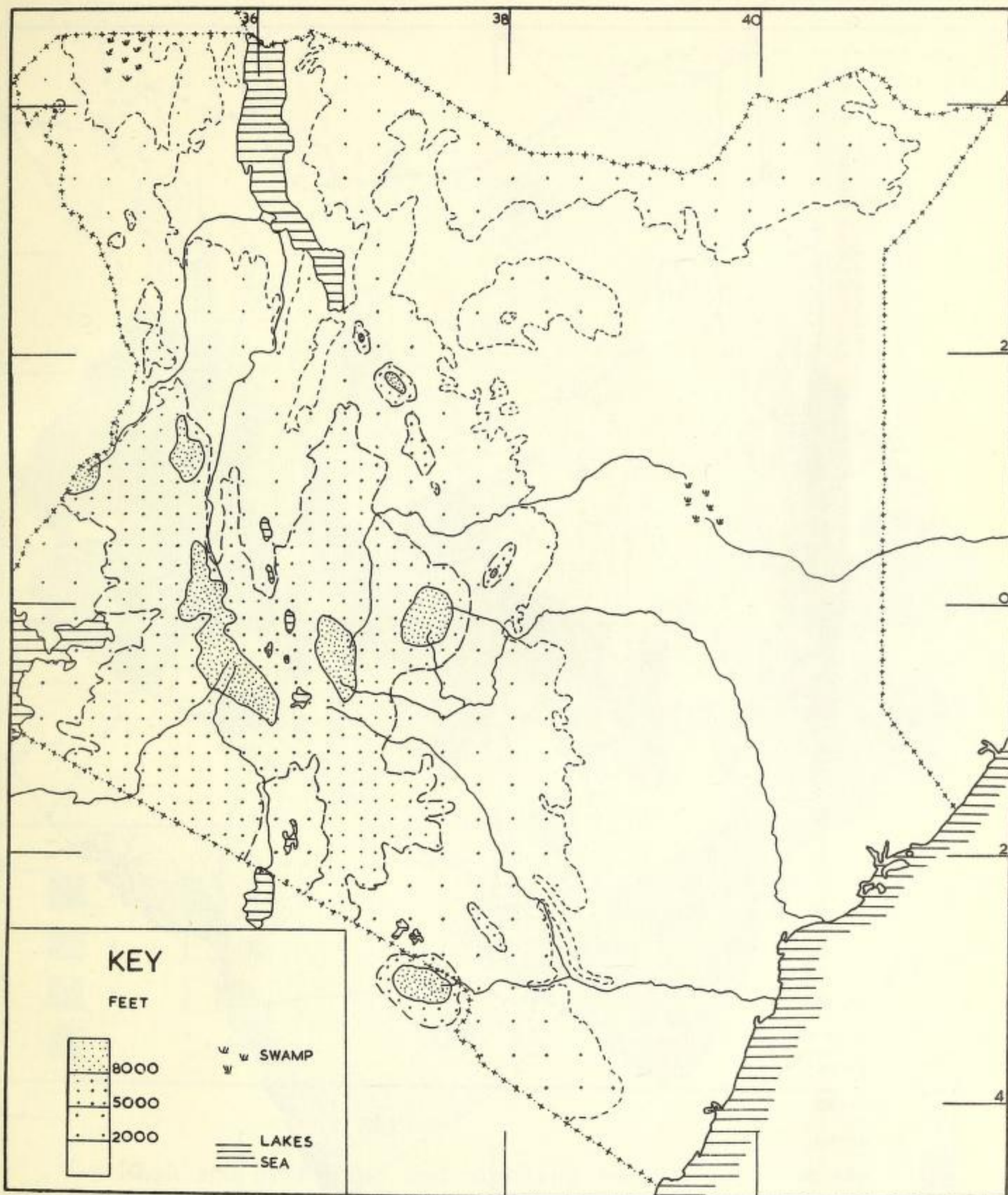
PLACE NAMES AND CONSERVATION AREAS



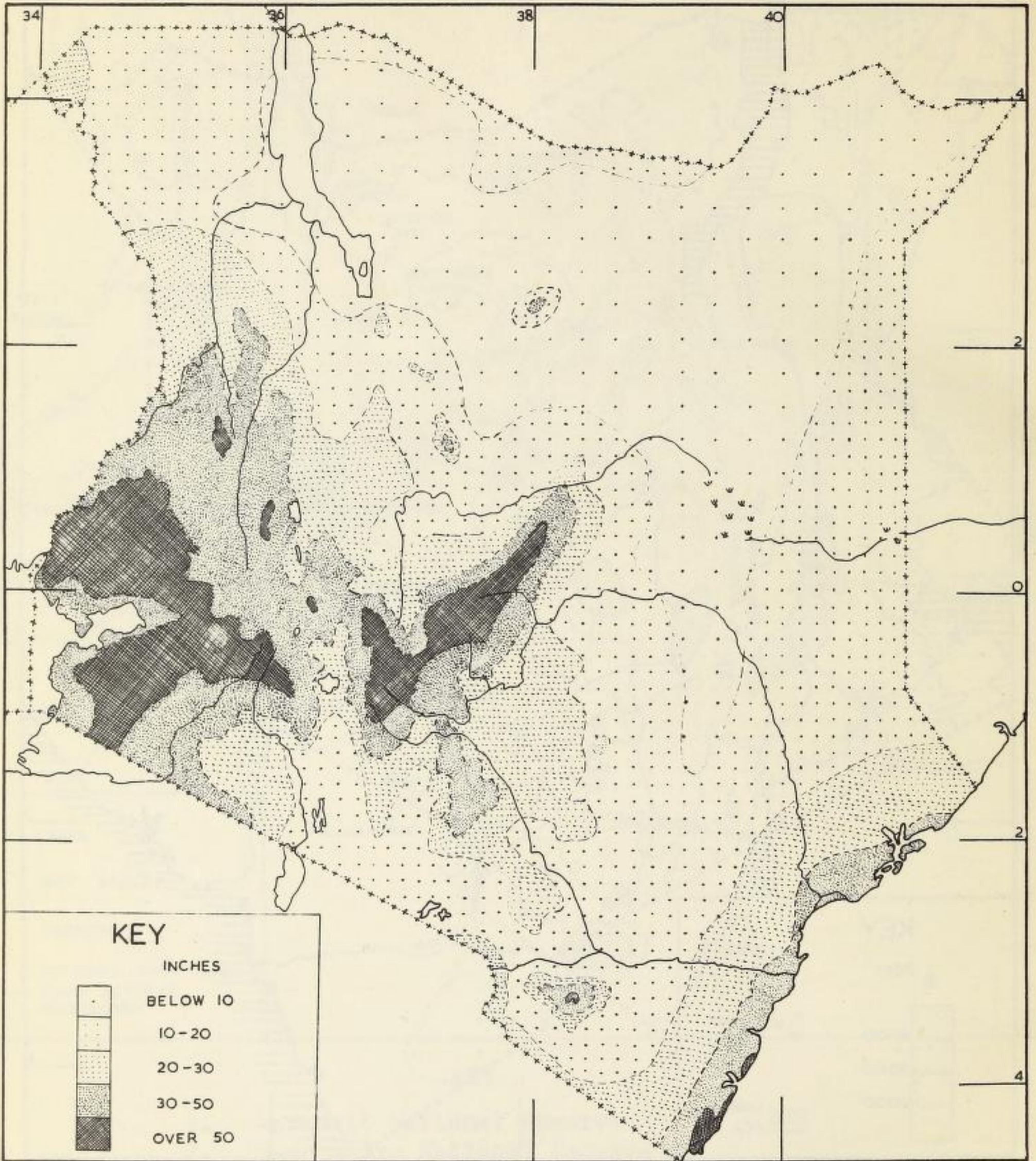
KEY

1. Marsabit National Reserve
2. Uaso Nyiro National Reserve
3. Meru African District Council Game Park
4. Mount Kenya Royal National Park
5. Aberdare Royal National Park
6. Masai Mara Game Reserve
7. Masai Amboseli Game Reserve
8. Tsavo Royal National Park
9. Nairobi Royal National Park

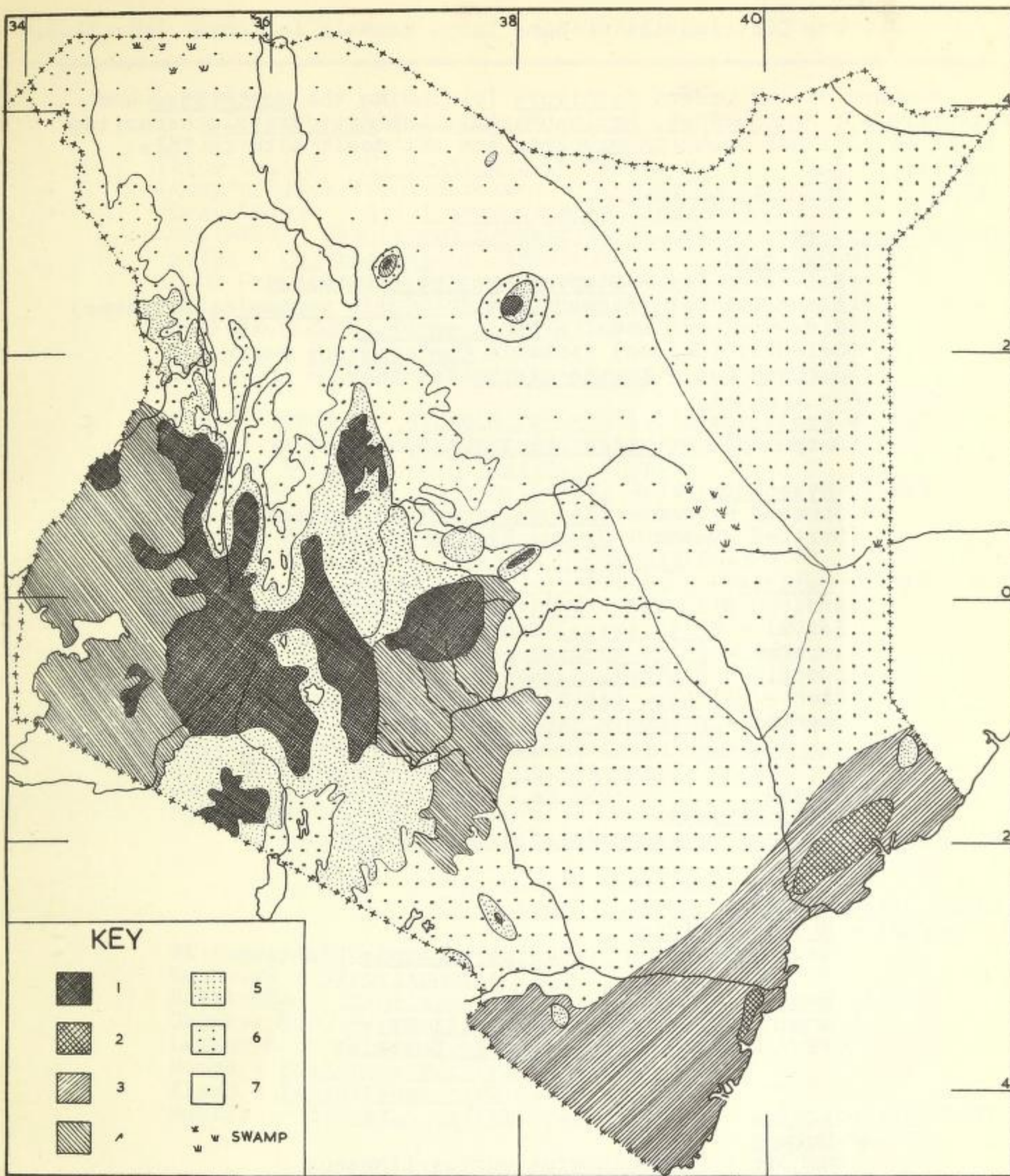
ALTITUDE










MEAN ANNUAL RAINFALL



VEGETATION



KEY

	1		5
	2		6
	3		7
	4	* w SWAMP	

KEY

- 1 = Highland grassland and Highland forest
- 2 = Coastal forest
- 3 = Coastal grass-bush
- 4 = Grouped tree-grassland (including Low tree- High grass)
- 5 = Scattered tree-grassland and Open grassland
- 6 = Desert grass-bush (Dry bush with trees)
- 7 = Desert scrub (and lava ridges, desert grass and shrub, and true desert)

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