

ECHO NEWS

Southern Conservation Area—KWS

Fifth Edition, October up to December 2010



THE MANEATER

By Zabulon Omulako, Former Warden Ngong station

Man-eater is an informal term for an animal that preys upon humans. This does not include scavenging. Although human beings can be attacked by many kinds of animals, man-eaters are those that



Spotted Hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*)

have incorporated human flesh into their usual diet. Spotted hyenas are usually timid around humans, and will typically flee over a distance of 300 metres when an approaching human is detected. Hyenas are known to have preyed on humans in prehistory: human hair has been found in fossilized hyena dung dating back 195,000 to 257,000 years. Although spotted hyenas do prey on humans in modern times, such incidences are rare.

Such a rare incident occurred in the course of 8th – 14th November 2010 at Mosiro, Ngong. Within this region, hyenas have become so wild that they now feast on human beings especially the children who are not able to defend themselves. They have a tendency of even going up to the houses after tasting human blood.

At the beginning of year 2010 there was a case of a young boy of 14 years old who was killed by the hyena while going

to the shop. The Ngong station officers attended the funeral and the hyena was eliminated because it had gotten so wild to an extent of going looking for human prey from the houses which caused much fear in the community.

Inside this issue:

Invasive species management Pg 2

Joint cross border aerial Census Pg 4

Tightening grip on the poachers Pg 8

What causes spiritual slumber Pg 9

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

By Kenana, Senior Research Scientist SCA

Invasive alien species are plants, animals, fungi, viruses and bacteria that have been introduced to habitats outside their natural range, where they have established and spread. These species cause harm to human livelihoods, health, biodiversity and ecosystems.



A picnic site in Oldonyo Sabuk national park that had been lost due to dense *Latana camara* infestation.

Invasive alien plant species reduce biodiversity in protected natural and semi natural areas, by displacing the indigenous vegetation thus destroying the support structure for plant and animals that depend on indigenous ecological communities. In their alien environments, invasive species thrive as they do not have natural enemies, diseases or limiting conditions.

If uncontrolled they destroy wildlife industry (which supports tourism), agriculture, livestock, livelihoods and health of people. It is a big problem which many countries are using a lot of money and resources to try and contain. The spread of invasive species is made worse by factors such as climate change and is now considered one of the greatest threats to eco-

logical and economic well being of our planet.

From previous control attempt a number of lessons in the fight against invasive species have been learnt. These lessons plus globally agreed practices are the pillars of the current approach for invasive species management in Southern conservation area. Which are:

1. Consistency: invasive species management is not a project like one time activity, the invasions are so much that you cannot finish at one go and re-growth is always present requiring follow up. Control is a regular routing park management activity.

2. Structured approach: One of the biggest mistakes we make is to begin controlling invasions at the

densest points. This usually does not succeed since after a short time re-growth occurs and resources put for control are wasted. The best practice is to quantify invasion by mapping and prioritizing areas, thereby working in units and portions that can be managed. When quantification is done, it is possible to

accurately plan, budget, implement, monitor, document, experiment and follow up.

Development and operation of a structured and systematic framework for management of invasive plant species, is currently being piloted in the Southern Conservation Area at Oldonyo Sabuk National park, Nairobi National park and Amboseli National park.



Sodom apple (*Solanum incanum*) at Amboseli

TRANSFERS



James Mogaka Sokoro

James Mogaka Sokoro was transferred from Hqs to SCA area as an area Accountant replacing Rebecca Kipchumba who was recalled to the Hqs. Sokoro joined KWS in 1996 and has served in various capacities as Internal auditor, project Accountant Tana GF, Senior Accountant in charge of payment and finally his current position as Area Accountant. ***Karibu sana Mogaka!***

WHAT READERS SAY

SCA-you guys are doing a great job. Well done. I always look forward to reading news from Southern Conservation Area. I am also very proud to be associated with you as your HQs Sports coordinator. Kind regards

Munira Anyonge Bashir.

Dear samuel,

Thanks for the newsletter but i have some reservations for u and the entire editorial team. Southern conservation area covers all the areas featuring in the newsletter including Amboseli national park yet there is not even a mention of it. I do remember i did a story on Lion collaring done in july and send it to you. other unique activities also happen in Amboseli but we seem not to be in the picture. is lack of communication? The name of the newsletter is derived from the known elephant of Amboseli and there is no mention of how that elephant family is doing, who took over please address those issues

S. Mwiu Researcher

Manuel Otieno Owiti

Manuel Otieno Owiti was transferred from Hqs AIE to Nairobi National Park as a Park accountant replacing John Gichara who has been transferred to KWSTI. Manuel joined KWS in March 2001 and has worked in various areas; Hqs Vote book, imprest. He has also worked as an Accountant in Malindi Marine park, and is currently the Nairobi National Park Accountant. **Karibu sana Owiti!**



Samuel, this is another hit from SCA. I have enjoyed the features on crossbreeds, the information on turtles and Kirukis satire. It looks your newsletter is getting better and better with every issue. The feature on the employee of the month is very motivating to those who have been recognized but you should cast the net wider and you will discover the treasure you have! Last month, I accompanied two of your staff to Amboseli Park to fix persistent problems with solar power supply for safari card equipment and I was amazed by the dedication of John Ngecu (Snr Telecomms Superintendent) and John Korir (Telecomms technician). For three days, the two worked tirelessly starting from 7am and finishing work well past 6pm without lunch break and without any whiff of complaint. All the technical problems were fixed and since then, the power supply has been stable. I know they also report to me on technical issues but I have no hesitation in recommending them for excellent job. **Eng. J. D. Muindi**

JOINT CROSS BORDER AERIAL CENSUS

By Steve Mwiu, Research Assistant-Amboseli N. Park

In the Amboseli-Kilimanjaro/ Magadi –Natron cross-border landscape, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) conducted a dry season total aerial count from 11th – 16th October 2010. The landscape comprises of various protected and non-protected areas in Kenya and Tanzania.

The survey's purpose was to gather comprehensive dry season data on various wildlife species, water and human activities and compare them with the March 2010 wet season distribution within the ecological area following the major drought of 2007, 2008 and 2009. The survey specific objectives were to determine: wildlife population and distribution, extent and spread of human activities, seasonal changes of wildlife distribution and identify threats to wildlife conservation in the landscape.

The survey that covered approximately 24,000 km² and extended from the foot of Chyulu hills to the East, Arusha National Park to the South, Lake Natron to the West and Lake Magadi to the



Pushing an aircraft ready for take off

North, was divided into four broad areas namely: Namanga-Magadi area, Amboseli area, Natron area and West Kilimanjaro area.

The count was conducted using the Aerial Total Count technique (Norton-Griffiths 1978) on 28 study blocks (17 in Kenya and 11 in Tanzania). The blocks are demarcated based on well defined ground features, such as roads, rivers, escarpment areas, mountains or parks and international boundaries. Each block is systematically searched using aircraft flying either North South or East West directions along transects of 1-2 km width depending on visibility and terrain. In the mountainous areas, irregular transects were undertaken. Seven aircrafts consisting of four huskies and three Cessna planes were used in the census. The crew of the aircrafts consisted of a pilot, Front Seat Observer (FSO) and Rear Seat Observer (RSOs).

The aircraft crew systematically searches for and makes observations and records of parameters of in-

terest within the flight transects. For each observation a waypoint is marked on a hand held Global Positioning System (GPS) and the observation recorded on a data sheet. At the end of count session the GPS flight paths and waypoints are downloaded using DNR-Garmin / MapSource software. Flight path and way point data are processed using Arc GIS 9.3 program. The observation data sheets are cleaned and entered into Microsoft Excel 2003/2007 for further analysis.

There were a total of 22 mammalian and six avian species recorded during the count, Common Zebra (*Equus burchelli*) was the most abundant wild species (11,550) and the least was Cape Eland (*Tragelaphus oryx*) (250). Natron area had the highest number of mammalian species (22) followed by Amboseli area (21), west Kilimanjaro (18) and Namanga-Magadi (15).

PICTORIAL

KWS Face book fans clean up held on 16th October 2010



The youngest participant



Kujivinjari baada ya Kazi

Benchmarking a Captive wildlife management training: 7th—13th Nov 2010



The team posing with a guide at Watamu Turtle Watch



Mutuku, Animal Keeper handling a Python at Crocodile and Snake park, Malindi.

De-snaring within Machakos: KWS, Born Free and Twiga Retreat team.



The Team preparing for the Activity



Assorted weapons and bush meat recovered from suspect's homestead.

KWS FOURTH INTER-AREA SPORTS

By Samuel Njoroge

Na k u r u Afraha Stadium was blooming with array of sport tracksuits and air filled with brassband music; gesture for the fourth KWS Inter-area sports competition. The event took place between 27th and 29th October 2010 at Afraha Stadium, Nakuru. As a tradition, it was doubling as thanks giving service

and inter-area sports competition. Among the presiding guests were M.A. Wa-Mwachai, CBS, PS- Ministry of forestry and wildlife and Hon David Mwiraria, EGH Chairman KWS board of trustee.

The thanks giving was held on Wednesday 27th October 2010 morning followed by official opening of the competition in the afternoon then the actual sports kicked off. The areas were grouped into pools for the sake of preliminaries ball games. For women volleyball, there were 3 pools and SCA was in pool "C" together with HQs and TCA. Men Volleyball had 3 pools where SCA was to-



SCA marching forward led by AD, Wilson Korir

gether with NCA and WCA. Soccer had 3 pools and SCA was grouped together with ECA and TCA in pool "B". While netball had only 2 pools each of four teams because NCA had no netball team. This may be due to lack of ladies in that hardship area. SCA was grouped in pool "B" together with

WCA, TCA and ECA. The SCA had two opening matches: women volleyball, SCA verses Hqs where SCA beat Hqs 3-0 sets. While in Soccer SCA opened the field "C" with ECA (the gold winners-to-be) and the former lost to the latter by 1-2 goals.

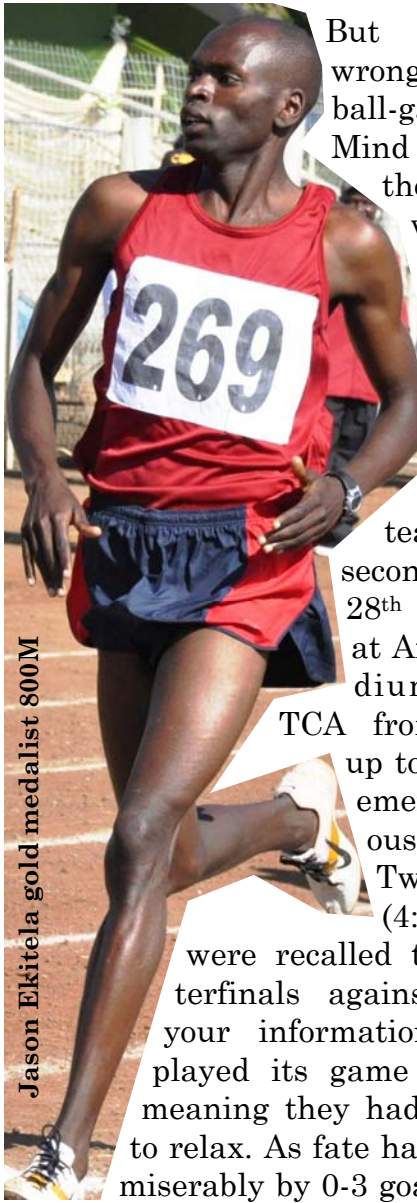
The second day of sports Thursday 28th October 2010 turned out to be a dooms day for SCA, having been knocked out in quarterfinals in all ball games except netball. In soccer the SCA lost to Hqs by 0-3, women volleyball SCA was thoroughly beaten by MCA 1-3 sets in best of five game. While in men volleyball SCA was shown dust by MCA 3-1 sets. The only consolation was netball team which qualified for semifinals without losing any game.

The third and final sport day, Friday 29th October 2010, Jason Ekitela made SCA proud by scooping the only gold medal SCA area won in 800m men race finals. The Tug of war team hopes of lifting the gold was taken a notch high when it defeated TCA in semifinals only to be cut short by WCA in the hotly contested finals. The netball team lost in the semifinals to finish in fourth position overall.



Volleyball ladies in action: SCA verses Hqs

.....Sports Continued



Jason Ekitela gold medalist 800M

But what went wrong with SCA ball-game teams? Mind you, in 2007 the soccer team was the champion and yesterday (2009) netball was third position. The SCA soccer team played its second game on 28th October 2010 at Afraha "A" stadium against TCA from 12:00 noon up to 2:00p.m and emerged victorious 2- 1 goals. Two hours later (4:00p.m), they were recalled to play quarterfinals against HQs. For your information, HQs had played its game at 9:00 a.m meaning they had all the time to relax. As fate had it, SCA lost miserably by 0-3 goals. The number of injuries was so high and there was no replacement. This brings in the other question: what is the ideal number for a soccer team participant per

area (18, 22 or more)? Some areas had even 22 participants while SCA had only 18. Indeed expenses had to be maintained within budget. But in future can the number of officials be reduced to accommodate more players? What ever the case, soccer team need re-focus holistically as it takes 90 minutes of exhaustion.



Kinyanjui receiving his medal

Nevertheless, thumbs up for members of SCA team for the commendable job. But above all, worthy mentioning is Jason Ekitela who won two medals; a gold and a bronze medals in 800m and 3,000m men races respectively. Secondly Flezzy Keter, who won three silver, medals in 800m, 1,500 m and 3,000m women races. Darts double mixed, Tug of war and 4 x 400m men race teams who won silver medals. Last but not least, Stephen Kinyanjui won 1,500 men race and condom Olympic team for winning bronze medals.

After three tough days of sport events, SCA emerged fifth position overall with 10 medals; 1 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze having defeated four conservation areas.



Cheering squad: Zabulon, Munira & Korir



Minister Hon. Wekesa blowing the whistle for the tag of war finals: SCA verses WCA

TIGHTENING GRIP ON POACHERS

By Timothy Kitonyi, Former Warden Kajiado

The new investigation team at Kajiado has doubled its efforts in curbing wildlife crime in the region. The team comprising of one officer and rangers have been traversing the larger Kajiado District which is prone to bush meat poaching and trophy dealings and their efforts have started bearing fruit.

In mid December 2010, an operation dubbed “Operation AHMED” was mounted targeting wildlife trophy dealers in the porous border of Na-manga. The operation entails intelligence gathering and



15 ostrich eggs recovered from two arrested suspects

searching of suspected dealers’ house-holds. The result was that a total of six poachers

were arrested with various game trophies and assorted hunting weapons recovered. The suspects were arraigned in court and fines ranging between Kshs. 15,000.00 – Kshs 20,000.00 were imposed. This can be attributed to the good rapport that has been developed between the judiciary and other security agencies.

With a new year at hand the team is aspiring to achieve most of its targets for the year 2011 and the issue of bush meat poaching will be curbed.

FLORA AND FAUNA OF NAIROBI N. PARK

By Michael Wanjau, Former SW Nairobi Park.

Nairobi park is amazing in this way , for having the largest antelope (Eland) and smallest antelope (Suni). Elands are found in many places in Africa and have become scarce in some area’s, the Nairobi Park is a place of refuge for them to breed and live in relative safety.



As the rains come, new life blossoms in many ways and many flowers can be seen. This crimson curved red petals with golden splashes stands out magnificently against the green surroundings; *a gloriosa superba*. Come to think of it , without the plants , none of this natural wonder would be here.

Crested Cranes are another priceless treasure in the Nairobi National Park. It is always a great pleasure to see that they are breeding successfully in this place of refuge . With binoculars, if possible you will benefit in some way, who knows ? maybe in your effort to find birds a few cats might get in the way !



Crested cranes near Impala observation point

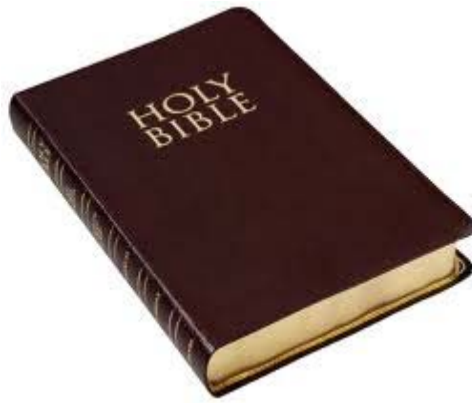
FROM THE PULPIT: Cause of spiritual slumber!

By Samuel Njoroge

Acts 20:7-12 is a narration of a young man named Eutychus seated in a window of an upper room where Paul was preaching. The young man then fell into a deep sleep resulting unto death after falling from the third floor. The scenario portrays spiritually asleep and undecided character; neither in nor out (Rev 3:15-16). The Bible states “**there were many lights**” which were lighted up, both for necessary uses, to see by, to read the word, and to administer the ordinance of the supper, and for the comfort and pleasure of the whole company, both preacher and hearers. Besides, the lights were also sources of physical warmth.

“Warmth” (comfortability and pleasure) in some cases causes spiritual slumber. Sometimes when blessed with prosperity (financially, promotion at work place, e.t.c.) there is a tendency of spiritual laxity. God knows the human being weakness and therefore fore-warned Israelites in Deuteronomy 8: 10-14

“When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I com-



mand thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;thou forget the LORD thy God,”

It is not uncommon to see brethren full of zeal for Christ before advent of prosperity but after, “warmth” pops in, they fall into a spiritual slumber. Before the prosperity, the fruits of Holy Spirit were conspicuous but after the prosperity, works of the flesh is manifested. (Gal 5:19– 23). The Galatians-type who begun in spirit but ended up in flesh.

Result is spiritual death. Eutychus fell in his sleep from third floor and died Acts 20:9b. In Deuteronomy 8:19, and 30: 17-18, God promised Israelites they shall perish if they forsake Him. Today’s mode of idolatry is worshipping the blessings and forsaking the “Blesser.”

To avoid this trap, every Chris-

tian needs to pray without ceasing 1st Thessalonians 5:17 and workout our salvation (Philippians 5:17). Paul was admonishing Philippians not to be obedient only in his presence but more so even in his absence. Likewise Christians should always worship God and do his work regardless of the situation. Thirdly God hates double mindedness as it is a sign of instability (James 1:8). In the parable of a Sower (Matt 13:22,) there were four categories of seed. But of interest is the third one; seeds among the thorns. They never dried up as the first or second nor do they yielded any fruits as the fourth ones. Outwardly well looking Christian but bears no fruit of Holy Spirit. The seeds were choked by the thorns which are interpreted as “**the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches**”.

No wonder God was telling Israelites in Jeremiah 4:3b “*Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns*”. Truly it is admirable to have riches of this world but godliness with contentment is the greatest gain.

There is hope regardless of one current spiritual situation. Eutychus was resurrected by Apostle Paul but today we have LORD JESUS CHRIST who is willing to revive us. If only we let Him know through prayers. Amen!

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Vision

To be a World Leader in Wildlife
Conservation

Mission

To sustainably conserve and manage
Kenya's wildlife and its habitat in col-
laboration with stakeholders for
prosperity

DID YOU KNOW? -Fun facts



CARACAL

The word caracal comes from the Turkish word "karakulak", meaning "black ear". The front legs of a caracal are noticeably shorter than its hind legs. Due to its long hind legs, it can jump to great heights and can even snatch flying birds from the air.

AFRICAN GOLD CAT

While hunting an African Gold cat holds its whiskers out on either side of its face like a fan. Just before pouncing on its prey, the cat shifts its whiskers forward, extending them like a net in front of its mouth. When the cat makes contact with its prey, the whiskers tell it exactly which way the animal is dodging in the final split second.



RED STINKWOOD (*Prunus Africana*)

An extract Pygeum, a herbal remedy prepared from the bark of *Prunus africana*, is used to treat a prostatic cancer. The species is becoming endangered, due to over harvesting.