

Amara Conservation News

The Newsletter Of Amara Conservation, Ltd.
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Supporting Tsavo East, Northern Area A New Focus for 2003

A key focus for Amara Conservation in 2003 will be to assist the KWS in their work in the Northern Area of Tsavo East. Daniel Woodley, a second generation Warden (his father was the well-known Bill Woodley, who along with David Sheldrick was one of the first Wardens in Kenya) works tirelessly in this remote area, and on a very limited budget. With a little less than \$1,000 a month, Danny manages an area comprised of over 3,000 sq miles, which is the beautiful but rugged and arid land that is referred to as the Northern Area of Tsavo East. This is a crucial and imperiled area in Kenya.



Danny Woodley and Ian Saunders
in the air over Tsavo North.

This area has the largest elephant population in the country, but is confronted with some significant difficulties. Being the portion of the park located closest to the Somalia border, it is a common access point for poachers entering the country if it is not adequately patrolled. There have in fact been very good

intelligence reports that with the next rains, the Somali Poachers have a well planned attack in mind. The last major poaching incident proved that they are highly organized, with new weapons, and even grenade launching rifles to shoot at planes. Unfortunately, it was necessary recently to send all but 3 of the 70 Rangers that would otherwise be assigned there on leave because there simply isn't enough water for them to live there.

(More on page 3)

The Mara Count 2002 The Count That Counts



This may look silly, but these people are taking part in a technologically sophisticated wildlife count.

We were quite proud to take part in the massive wildlife count organised by Robin Reid of ILRI (International Livestock Research Institute) and Mike Rainy of Explore Mara Ltd. and Bush Homes. The Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem supports the most diverse migration of grazing mammals on earth, and surveys like this allow for the development of
(More on page 2)

Inside

The Count That Counts -

The 2002 Mara Animal Count.

Front & Page 2

More Reel Progress -

Showing Educational Films In Rural Kenya

Page 2

Bura Team Update -

A quick update on the the teams in the field.

Page 3

Bushmeat Trade -

A continuing and critical problem in East Africa.

Page 4

More thanks -

We can never thank our supporters enough...

Page 4

More Reel Progress

Educating With Film

We are continuing to move ahead with the distribution of the AEFF's (African Environmental Film Foundation) films in January of 2003. Specifically, we'll be using mobile units to show these environmental educational films to rural communities in Kenya. Lack of information lies at the core of many illegal and destructive practices currently plaguing the country. These people have no access to information. By providing it, especially with films of the AEFF, we can make a positive impact. AEFF's films show not only what is wrong and harmful, but also offer simple alternatives that work. They are purposed for African audiences, and are much more than entertainment. We know that in these rural areas people will come from miles to see the films. We believe that through the medium of film, one can most easily and quickly reach these audiences, many of whom are illiterate. The Founder of Amara Conservation, Lori Bergemann, will lead the team with two staff - one to provide assistance with the actual film showings, and one for logistical and security reasons. Amara will provide the film unit vehicle (a Land Rover through Ford Motor Corp), as well as a projector, generator, speakers, video player, cabling and all supplies for the team. We'll be funding the initial three-week film tour. We have planned specific routes that will

most effectively utilise our resources. We will be showing films in central locations where we can reach the largest audiences in each area. We will be gathering any information that we gain from the communities and judge the effectiveness of the operation with that data.

Our budget for 12 months is \$141,000. We have \$52,000 of that need met in equipment and a vehicle. We need funding for salaries and operating expenses of \$90,000. We are currently seeking foundation and corporate funding for this amount.

The Count That Counts (Continued from page1)

management and policy recommendations to manage these pastoral ecosystems more sustainably.



Areas covered by the count. The Outlined Area Is The Mara Reserve

The Mara Count not only records 23 wild and 5 domestic animal species that are active during the day, it notes water sources, vegetation, shambas, fences, and burns, as well as infrastructure (such as buildings) and vehicles.

“...AEFF's films show not only what is wrong and harmful, but also offer simple alternatives that work. They are purposed for African audiences, and are much more than entertainment ...”

This is done at an amazing spatial resolution of 333 x 333 metres, by utilising GPS and specialized software installed on PDA's carried by the teams.



The Amara Vehicle Used In The Count

Teams that don't have PDA units with them log the information on paper and the data is entered when the team can get to a computer & generator.

Detailed results from the 2002 count should be available in late December.

Tsavo East, Northern Area (Continued from page1)

Because there is no permanent water supply in the area, this as an ongoing problem which could be eased considerably for the relatively moderate cost of around \$15,000. At present they have only a rock catchment system on Ithumba Hill, which funnels rainwater into tanks. They currently have two tanks and both leak badly.



A Typical Ranger Base in the Area

Perhaps more importantly, the road system in the area has fallen into severe disrepair. Most roads are reduced to narrow elephant trails. Danny has been trying to open roads, using casual laborers and the single grader truck available. Their other truck, an old Nissan dump truck that's more than thirty years old, was stranded with broken springs when we visited. If he can get some of these roads opened, AND keep his few vehicles running, the rangers stand a chance to catch the bandits. If not, this work is virtually impossible. A tank of fuel costs \$3,700 - which is enough fuel for two months - but clearly this can't be acquired out of the monthly budget Of \$1,000.

Simply put, he needs water tanks and fuel and radios for the rangers, as well as some support providing salaries for men to open roads. There are longer term needs as well, which once provided for will help to open the Park to tourism, and it is a truly spectacular place to



What do you mean? She runs GREAT!
Some new vehicles would be a godsend.

visit. On a positive note, Danny has just received the plastic tanks needed from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. Once the rains come, he needs to build permanent concrete tanks there, using the water that is caught in the plastic tanks. We have an estimate of 2ksh/litre for these tanks, and they estimate the total cost at under \$15,000. This, along with radios, fuel and some decent vehicles, are amongst the initial needs we'd like to help provide. They have three old Land Rovers that are clearly on their last legs, as it were. (See photos.) Then they can take the plastic tanks and install them with gutters on the roofs of all the buildings, and at the few ranger outposts that they have. These things can truly help save the day for Tsavo, for the elephants, the other animals, and the people who live there.

"...These things can truly help save the day for Tsavo, for the elephants, the other animals, and the people who live there...."

Bura Team Update The Ongoing De-Snaring



Lori looks at some of the thousands of snares gathered by the team.

The Bura desnaring team is hard at work, getting up to 300 snares a day. They just started in March, and have really built a solid working team - what they are doing is vital. Jill Woodley of the Sheldrick Trust and her husband JF coordinate and keep a close eye on the teams, and it's becoming evident that another team is sorely needed. The men are working together very well, and having found some informers, are being very effective. This is hard work in rough country. While we provided the vehicle, we would also like to be able to fund the ongoing costs of the team. At about \$15,000 a year to run the team, this is a very effective use of funds!

More Thanks

We can never say enough...

While words cannot convey the importance of each and every of your contributions, we'd like to thank....

Heidi Bergemann; Ted and Ann Annis and the Annis Foundation; Jan Dillon; Ron Reed; Richard VanHouse and Ford Motor Company/Land Rover; Ian Gray at Interfluence; Gloria Simoneaux; Jason Magee; Marty Betts, Joan Harvey; Gauri Thergaonkar; Lauren Bigelow; Joseph Haney; Candis Stern; Esther and John Floyd and The Floyd Lead Charitable Trust; Tom Ward; Jody Glancy; Dennis Webster, Zoe Cowan and the entire staff of the Earle Restaurant; Tom Thompson; Ralph Bergemann; Howard Cash; Charlie Adams; Gail Stielstra; Kaye Mears/Tom Garthwaite; Ann & Mark Goodman; Katherine King; David Merchant; Josh Sedlack; The Dave Froseth Band; Lauren Betts; Deborah Sweeney; William Merchant; Fred Shell; Cristina and Danny Guberinich; Peggy DeParry, Jan Onder; Chacona Johnson; and in Kenya, so many people including - Simon and Tanya Trevor and Ian Saunders of the AEFF; Jill Woodley, JF Chavrier and Daphne Sheldrick of The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust; Daniel and Nana Woodley; Mike and Judy Rainy; Paul and Christof Verleysen; the staff of Ngong House, and everyone who contributed to our 2002 fundraising dinner and auction at the Earle restaurant in Ann Arbor, MI.

The Bushmeat Trade

A Growing Problem

With the attention given this year to CITES and crucial issues pertaining to the ivory trade, it's easy to let bushmeat slide off the radar as an environmental concern. However, this remains a key reason for poachers to ply their trade, and a key reason to keep the de-snaring teams mobilised.

Although many conservationists believe "traditional" bushmeat consumption might be sustainable, the unfortunate fact is bushmeat consumption is on the rise in plains countries like Kenya and Tanzania, and the hunting of animals like De Brazza's Monkey, Zebra, Eland, and Wildebeest is fueled by a market that includes both domestic and international demand. Not only might you find a variety of bushmeat in locally produced minced meat in Kenya, but authorities in Germany, Belgium, and other European countries have seized bushmeat shipments headed for restaurants popular among African migrants. While it's largely the commercial trade that drives the increased levels of illegal bushmeat harvesting, locals may also be compelled to hunt and sell bushmeat as a source of income. This is yet another reason that education is so important in rural Kenya.

In yet another alarming development, researchers have discovered a possible link between bushmeat consumption and HIV/AIDS and Ebola outbreaks.

(Continued, next column)

"...researchers have discovered a possible link between bushmeat consumption and HIV/AIDS and Ebola outbreaks...."

Bushmeat

(Continued)

While organisations like the Kenya Wildlife Service are doing an excellent job of battling the problems associated with the bushmeat trade, it's a growing problem requiring ever more resources, as literally thousands of animals are killed each day.

To Learn More

About Amara Conservation

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