

nature net

The Nature Kenya Newsletter www.naturekenya.org

February 2002



Okay, 2002 is here; where did that last year go?

It is time to take stock again, to look back along the road travelled, a road not unlike the one we travel every day. You know, the unlit roads, the occasional smooth bits, the gaping potholes.

A staggering pothole was the forest excisions, and as we wondered how our forests and the plant and animal life they support would take the impact, we undertook to try ovoid it. We sat at numerous Kenya Forest Working Group meetings trying to think our way through, we helped to draw up the letters of objection, and we circulated petitions. However, we have landed hard, and we need to be ever vigilant and active over forest destruction everywhere in Kenya.

With relief, we have had some smooth bits. We continue to take action in several different but inter-linked ways - on the ground conservation at Important Bird Areas (IBAs), advocacy at national and district level, raising awareness and more. Our work in Kenya is better known and recognised within the country. Progress has been made in turning the Important Bird Areas programme to one of Important Biodiversity Areas.

World Birdwatch was successfully undertaken by hundreds of birdwatchers around the country, and a live insect exhibit and a bat project organised in collaboration with National Museums of Kenya are just hovering over the horizon.

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Our lives through animal eyes

Monday 11 February '02, 5:30 p.m. Louis Leakey HALL, National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi, Refreshments prior & Town drop off

We will screen the first two programmes of this BBC production, which looks at what animals see and how our actions influence their behaviour. 45 mins

JOB VACANCIES

Nature Kenya
**SITE CONSERVATION INTERN
Arabuko, Mida Creek
& Sabaki River
NEEDED URGENTLY**

Task: Development of community-based eco-tourism initiatives in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, Mida Creek and Sabaki River Mouth.

Qualifications required: Degree in an environmental/biological subject is preferred · Experience in tourism sector and/or tour guiding preferred · Out-going and dynamic in presenting ideas to others · Good working knowledge of German language, prior interaction with tourists and originating from the coastal region will be an added advantage

Send application and curriculum vitae to the Conservation Programme Manager, Nature Kenya, by 20 February 2002

EVENTS

WIND IN THE TREES

Saturday 9 February '02

Nairobi Arboretum,
11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



An annual music event organised by Friends of Nairobi Arboretum. Raffle with great prizes to be won; star prize is a Kenya Airways return ticket to Mombasa. Entrance fee Ksh 100; Raffle tickets Ksh 50

NOTICES

LOOKING FORWARD TO REGIONALGROWTH

OBJECTIVES - To provide the opportunity for Nature Kenya members to get together and develop their interests · to facilitate member recruitment outside of Nairobi · to take action for conservation · to raise funds for regional activities · to adapt a site or take action for Important Biodiversity Areas

If you are interested in starting a Nature Kenya initiative in your area, with these objectives, please write to the Membership Services Manager expressing your interest and how you believe it may be possible in your area. Thanks!

Action for Biodiversity Conservation

NATURE KENYA, P. O. Box 44486, 00100 GPO Nairobi Tel: 749957 / 746090 Fax: 741049 E-mail: office@naturekenya.org

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION
FIELD COURSES 2002
IN TROPICAL ECOLOGY
UGANDA, TANZANIA & MADAGASCAR

Kibale Forest National Park, Uganda

23 June to 22 July 2002 TBA 02/1
27 July to 26 August 2002 TBA 02/2
Kibole Forest is a mid-altitude tropical moist forest with a spectacular array of species and a long established programme of ecological research.

East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania

2 September to 30 September 2002 TBA 02/3
The forests of the Usambaras are noted for their extraordinary biological richness and high species endemism. These forests are now severely fragmented and under great human pressure. The course will introduce some of the area's research and conservation programmes.

Dry Forests, W. Madagascar

1 November to 30 November 2002 TBA 02/4(Provisional)
Madagascar's dry forest has undergone high rates of deforestation and fragmentation. The course will study aspects of the forest ecosystem and introduce regional research and conservation programmes. The course will be taught in English, but some knowledge of French would be an advantage.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Scholarships are available which include transport to and from the field site, accommodation, subsistence and course fees. Applicants must be nationals of an African country. They should have a first degree in a biological science (for example, zoology, botany, wildlife management or conservation biology) by the time the course begins. Applicants should either be studying for a higher degree or have an active involvement in biological field research; however, applicants should note that the courses are intended for scientists at the **start** of their research careers.

Training opportunities continued on page 4

TRIPS & OUTINGS

TO WESTERN KENYA MOUNTAINS, FOREST AND LAKE

Thursday 28 March - Wednesday 3 April '02

Mt. Elgon, Kangelai Escarpment, Kakamega Forest, Lake Victoria



Day 1 Thursday 28 March Nairobi - Lokitela farm

Early start from Nairobi, heading for Lokitela farm. Lokitela farm is situated 19 kms west of Kitale town on the foothills of Mount Elgon. Although intensive farming is practiced on Lokitela, there are 30 hectares of riverine forest with birds and small mammals.

A camp site will be put up for us on the river, expect pit loos and safari showers or to wash in the river. Tony and Adrienne Mills who are our hosts will provide breakfast and dinner, so *bring your lunches for the 28 (picnic lunch enroute), 29 and 30th.*

Note: Bring your own tent and bedding

Day 2 Friday 29 March Mt Elgon

Walk to the caves, well known for their 'salt mining' elephants and thousands of clicking fruit bats; the Endeless bluff and the afro-alpine zone of Giant Groundsels and Lobelias.

Note: Part of Mt. Elgon is a National Park (personal expense)

Day 3 Saturday 30 March Kongelai Escarpment

Early morning drive to the 700 metre Escarpment situated 5 kms from Makutano township on the Kitale-Lodwar road. Morning birdwalk (Kongelai Escarpment is a well known birding area). Drive on to Kacheliba on for picnic lunch on river bank.

Day 4 Sunday 31 March Lokitela farm - Kakamega Forest

Drive to Kakamega Forest National Reserve for a guided walk, which gives us a chance to explore the northern part of the forest before driving to the southern part, which is run by the Forest Department. Lunch at Isecheno (southern part) Guest House and

Campsite (also overnight here). Basic meals to be organized by the Kakamega Environmental Education Programme (KEEP).

Afternoon traditional dance and birdwalk organised by KEEP.

Day 5 Monday 1 April Kakamega Forest, & on to Mbita Point

Optional early morning birdwalk before breakfast. Morning guided birdwalk. Depart after lunch for Mbita Point, to overnight at Lake Victoria Safari Village, situated on the eastern shore of Lake Victoria (about 150 km from Kisumu).

The Safari Village consists of 5 double traditional thatched huts. Depending on bookings we might have to split the group with some participants sleeping at the Elk Guesthouse in town, about 3 kms away. Elk is managed by the same persons as the Safari Village, but the guesthouse does not serve meals, these will have to be taken at the Safari Village.

Day 6 Tuesday 2 April B i r d Sanctuary, Ruma National Park

Visit Mbasia islands for bird and reptile viewing. These twin islands are about an hour's boat ride from the Village. After lunch drive to Ruma, which is about 1 hour (about 30 km) from Mbita

Day 7 Wednesday 3 April M b i t a Point - Nairobi

Via Narok, Sotik and Kisii we return to Nairobi

Cost per person: Ksh 15,500/-

Bookings must be accompanied by a non-refundable deposit of half the trip cost (KSh 7,750/-). Balance must be paid in full by 5 March '02.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

BIRD RINGING

Meet at the Museum, Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

SUNDAY BIRDWATCH

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, i.e. 17 February. The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

TREE WALK

Guided Tree Walks in the Arboretum on the last Monday, i.e. 25 February from 9:30 a.m. Meet at the FONA offices beside the Girl Guides HQ. Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.

ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. 2 February, at 6:30 a.m. from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person.

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fart Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month i.e. 16 February, at 4:00 p.m. from Ratna Square, Nyalı

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

FEBRUARY DIARY

Sat 2	ASF Birdwalks
Sat 9	Wind in the Trees
Mon 11	Life Sense video
Sat 16	FFJ Birdwalk
Sun 17	Sunday Birdwatch
Mon 25	Tree Walk
Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning	
Bird ringing every Thursday Morning	

Bird Hotline 749957

Please note the records below are unconfirmed

Grey Plover, Broad-billed Sandpiper,
African Skimmer, Pacific Golden Plover
Sabaki River Mouth/ December
Mark Smith, Ben Mugambi

African Crowned Eagle, Abyssinian
Ground Thrush, Red-fronted Parrot,
Verreaux's Eagle, Mantane Oriole,
Crested Guineafowl, Bar-tailed Trogon,
African Black Duck, Mt. Kenya N.P/
December Joonne Reszka, Kuria Ndung'u

Spotted Redshank/ December
Madagascar Squacco Heron /
November Nairobi N.P/ Bernd de
Bruijn

African Skimmer Nakuru N.P/
December
Narinder Heyer, Jennifer Oduari

Lynes's Cisticola
Menengai Crater, Nakuru/ December
Bernard Chege, John Prosperos

African Hill Babbler Timau/ November
Rose Caldwell Gambaga Flycatcher Mwea N.
R/ October Rose Caldwell, Miles Coverdale

Parrots breeding Tchui Road, Nairobi/
November Shariffa Keshavjee

ADVERTISE IN NATURE NET

Reach over 1000 members
by advertising in Nature Net
Rates for Classifieds: • Up to 25
words 250/- • Up to 50 words 500/-
• 1/4 page @ 1750/-
• 1/2 page @ 3000/-

NGONG ROAD FOREST DISCOVERY DAY

Saturday 2 March '01
from 7:00 a.m. Tickets Shs 2,000/-
children 8- 18 Shs 1,000/-

Come enjoy this beautiful forest and raise funds for fencing.

Tickets available from KLDA offices in Langata Link (tel 891784 - open 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.) or from the organisers. Donations are also welcome and cheques should be made out to 'Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust', Box 42281, Nairobi. For more information call Tany Church (891168/890435) or Susan Mitruk (890276 or 0733-907-063)

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Our membership grew by a couple of hundred to thirteen hundred, and member activities are many and continue to be of interest. The web site has enabled thousands of people around the world to learn of our work.

But just as you think what bliss, another pothole lurches up to spoil the fun. Publications have been a concern. To address this, your Executive Committee has decided to merge the *EANHS Bulletin* and *Kenya Birds*, into a single popular publication, coming out twice a year.

Will we be able to maintain our multi-faceted activities past, 2002? The Executive Committee and staff are currently drawing up a Business Plan to guide Nature Kenya.

With this sort of wear and tear, it is no wonder we need you our members, who push when inevitably we break down, get stuck or disappear down a pothole.

We want to thank you, for the committee work you undertook, for the members you recruited, for the petitions you circulated, for your subscription, for caring about your environment. This bus is going on despite the road conditions and we trust that you will stay with us, renew your membership and continue the conservation work for people and nature.

As our major sources of funding come to an end, it will be a very challenging year. With no spare wheels, we will need your support more than ever. Please renew as a sponsor member!

Editor & Membership Services Manager,
Catherine Ngarachu

THANK YOU!

DONATION OF LIFE SENSE VIDEO

We would like to express our appreciation to Mrs. Ann Birnie for the donation of this video. It will be a tremendous resource to Nature Kenya programmes.

Training opportunities continued from page 2

Applications (including letters of reference) must be in English and **must include:**

- a) A **cover letter** explaining in detail why you want to attend the course (no more than 2 pages);
- b) A **Curriculum Vitae** giving details of academic and non-academic career, achievements and interests (other academic documents not necessary). Include your current postal address, telephone, fax and/or email;
- c) Confidential references (in English) from **two referees** (e.g. lecturers at your university, or employers at your current institution). All applicants must arrange to have references sent to the TBA as soon as possible: you may include them in a sealed envelope with your application, or ask your referee to send them directly to the TBA.

Applications should be sent to the **TBA Project Officer**, at the Nature Kenya address or email: tba2@africaonline.co.ke, before the closing date of 20 February 2002 (successful applicants will be notified by the end of March).



FUNDAMENTALS OF ORNITHOLOGY

A CERTIFICATE COURSE FOR BIRD GUIDES
AND BIRDERS
ELSAMERE FIELD STUDIES CENTRE,
LAKE NAIVASHA 23 - 30 APRIL 2002



Topics to be covered include: fieldcraft and ethics · evolution and classification · scientific names · habitat and distribution · identification: parts of a bird; finding the right family; making descriptions and taking field notes; calls; submitting records; using bird guides; wetland, forest and grassland birds · migration and movements · flight, feathers and physiology · feeding strategies · breeding behaviour · bird ringing · habitats and conservation.

Fees and applications

KSh 23,500/= per person, payable to 'Nature Kenya'. This subsidised fee includes seven nights full-board accommodation, transport and all other course materials, fees, equipment, and teaching expenses.

Applicants must have experience of birdwatching, and education up to at least KCSE level (a CV is required with application). There is a strict limit of **18 places** and to secure a place, applications must be accompanied by a non-refundable deposit of half the course fees (KSh 11,750/=). Course fees must be paid in full by 16 April.

Applications or inquiries, should be addressed to: Lawrence Maina, Nature Kenya or e-mail office@naturekenya.org