

MAZINGIRA

•KNOWLEDGE •SKILL •ATTITUDE •TRENDS *yetu*

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Endangered heritage ...the grey parrot

12th
issue

MAZINGIRA

INSIDE :

Inspiration: Taka Smart
Education: grey parrot

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“

BE BOLD.

*Do what the ordinary
fear.*

”

STAND FOR
CONSERVATION



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Lejint Lifestyle



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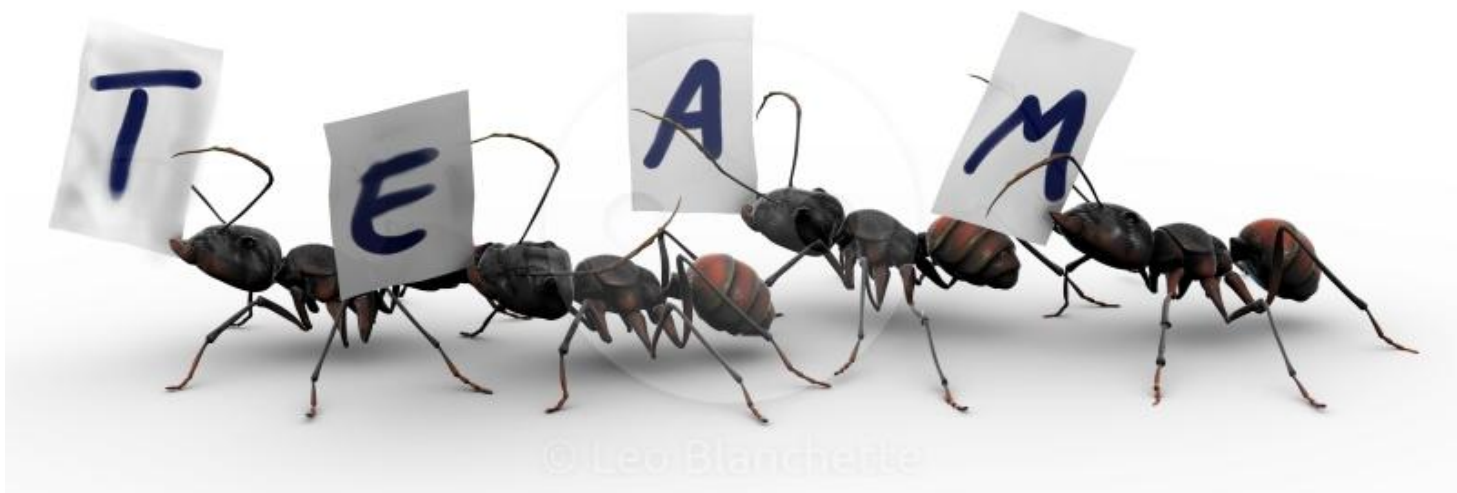
When one is working, he needs to be cautious and conscientious. This is very practical. So we need to be as steadfast in our work as ants. When one is living, he has to have a bit of romantic spirit. So our life should be as romantic as butterflies. In our lives, we should not be dominated by negative mentality. Success is achieved by those with a positive attitude. We should get rid of the trouble in despair, seize happiness in suffering, change attitude under pressure, see hope in failure and become the master of our own destiny.

If I can quote the good book, Joshua 1:9 which says ; Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

I also command you dear reader that the challenges we face in the quest for a peaceful, prosperous and conducive mother-nature are great, but we must continue the quest. Never give up.

just like the ants, unite and work as a team, because together we are strong. Just like the butterflies, be romantic and grace the earth. Just like our ancestors, lets keep the fight, for they fought for our future, and we deserve to fight for our future and generations to come.

have a blessed 2017.



Reader' views

ISSUES, NEWS

Greenmade group from Maasai Mara kenya wish to send our gratitude to Mazingira Yetu Magazine for the wonderful work they have done to our group .

We wish to say that you have exposed our group to various people of good will who have shown great interest to support our good initiative of saving wild animal habitat in Maasai Mara .

Others have already supported our group by providing funds in improving our Greenmade tree nursery project ; now we have well installed water tank , shadenet, and other seedlings material like tubes , seeds and red soil . May God bless you abundantly as you continue doing this great work .

Director , Greenmade group, David Oseko .
Page; Greenmade movement Maasai Mara ,
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"Taka smart is a combination of a Swahili and English, with Taka meaning Waste. Taka smart was founded in 2015 by Saruni Maina who was later joined by Kevin Nderitu, Clement Habinshuti and Jessica Ninterettse. We entered the Hult prize competition in 2015/2016 and the challenge was to come up with a practical concept that would double the income of crowded urban dwellers with an aim of doubling their income through indirect savings.

Nairobi City County generates approximately two million tonnes of plastic wastes a month as result water drainage channels resulting to floods, mosquitoes find a place to breed, toxic gases are emitted with the burning of the plastics resulting to respiratory illness and contribution to green house gases that result to global warming. Taka smart aims at making people more responsible for their waste by giving rewards for recycling of which the rewards can be redeemed to pay for a service and purchase house hold goods. Through this initiative households are able to generate income, improve a family's disposable income and in the long run make them save money through reduced spending.

Since the commencement of the project, Taka smart has grown from a concept into a fully operational registered limited company, increased the management team from four to six and lastly the biggest achievement was representing Africa Nazarene University in the Hult prize Regional completion in the United Arab Emirates City of Dubai in early 2016. After attending the competition we ran a pilot program at Africa Nazarene University main campus for a period of three months which resulted to over 140 active registered users into the system and recycling of over 500 kilograms of plastics.

Besides the success, the company faces a number of challenges like finding a suitable buyer to purchase the accumulated plastic waste, lack of a truck and man power to collect the waste from individual households, a compressor to crush the plastics into manageable size for easy storage, a ware house to store the waste and lastly high costs of operating SMS based communication between Taka smart and it's customers.

The company is open for investors, agents (as an agent you will be required to have a secure storage facility, a collection point that is accessible to users and access to a Smartphone) and student partners (the students will be in charge of collection and storage within their campuses). We also welcome corporates to work with us and set up collection stations in their premises to allow their employees to be involved in recycling.

Taka smart shows how young people can be creative and only need a little bit of support in making a difference in the society by become job creators and help address the plastic waste menace facing Kenya today.





Kindly describe yourself?

Describing yourself is always a tricky exercise but I think I am chap who is quite happy in his own skin. I left home and school at an early age in London and eventually joined the British Army; soldiering was my first career which seems to have overlapped considerably with my second career, conservation. I studied Wildlife Conservation at the University of East London and then later as a postgraduate at the African College of Wildlife Management, Mweka, Tanzania.

Conservation in today's world has become more complex than ever before, it has become a multi level discipline that is now more about the management of human based situations in the rural environment than just traditional ecology. A varied and eclectic past helps me to meet the various challenges that conservation now throws at us. I find that I draw more on my global life experiences operating in places such as the Middle East, Afghanistan and across Africa as points of reference than I do on my scientific training.

How did you discover you had a love for wildlife conservation?

My motivation to get into what we call "conservation" was more of a journey, wanting to live and work in natural and remote places and to apply my evolving ideas about the importance of "managing" ourselves as humans to secure the integrity of the wild, with a view to addressing the important and sometimes inconvenient issues that critically affect the survival of our last wild places and wildlife. I visited many such places, initially sparking this belief when I was a soldier, and later I wanted to return outside of the military sphere. I suppose I am a habitat or landscape chap rather than a single species conservationist, focusing on creating the most conducive environment for mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, geology and people working in a coordinated way - what we today call biodiversity. To do this of course we have to understand our own role in the survival of the "real" and not man made world that has increased dramatically over the past one hundred years. People find it strange when I say that I am not the greatest fan of the human race; maybe because I have seen our species at its worst in various situations around the world. I live in a remote and wild part of the country where I am surrounded by a plethora of wildlife but I also understand that as global human populations increase we need to manage ourselves in a much more responsible way and to do that we have to engage and work with each other and at least try to ensure that we are in a position to do the right thing. After all it's all in our hands, we have made it that way...

Drought has always been having a devastating impact on both wildlife and humans, going forward what



measures should be put in place to minimize its effects on humans and wildlife?

We as humans have to take responsibility for some of the impact we feel from a prolonged drought or conversely from flooding. Those of us that live in rural Kenya have seen over the years both the severity and frequency in climatic extremes; however, if we managed ourselves better and strengthened our ability to cope with such fluctuations we would start to suffer a good deal less. This is where the conservation movement can make a real impact working and advising those who live in areas most affected by extremes in weather. Rural people do after all have the ultimate "power to conserve" if not always the technical knowledge and resources. In doing so, relationships can be formed to help ensure the natural environment is robust enough to support itself and the human population, developing respect on both sides.

Managing our rural environment sustainably is part of managing our own future: if we do it badly we will suffer; if we do it well we will reap the rewards. There are many players who, if coordinated can come together and provide the skills, vision, advice, guidance and even start up funding where required. There is no quick fix or silver bullet to creating a rural environment conducive to success. Some of the decisions made may not be popular but could be in the best interest of all stakeholders in the long term. National government, county governments, the rural general public and NGOs can, if they come together in a coordinated and mutually respectful way start to make changes in how we can best live with what nature provides and how we can limit the damage that we inflict on nature by our activities and actions.

How does Tsavo conservation group engaging with the constituents living in rich biodiversity areas?

Tsavo Conservation Group works to secure wilderness areas in Kenya's iconic Tsavo landscape beyond the borders of the national parks and further afield for the benefit of wildlife, habitat and people. Tsavo Conservation Group assists local residents who own conservancies to implement Stabilization through Conservation (StabilCon) as an effective strategy for enhancing the safety of both humans and wildlife, strengthening the rural economy, sustainably managing natural resources and building robust community governance systems.

How to balance cattle keeping in rich biodiversity areas without harming it's carrying capacity has been a problem. What do you think can be done to address the matter?

Put quite simply, our livestock sector needs to be re-invented. Much of Kenya is classified as either arid or semi arid and it's here where the majority of wildlife dwells and also where the bulk of Kenya's livestock are kept. This situation does not bode well for environmental stability. Environmental stability relates to the robustness of the environment to sustain the off-take from humans, livestock and wildlife. To achieve this the equilibrium must be managed in a way that does not destroy "the goose that lays the golden egg!"

Like all end users, the utilizers of the natural world must be managed or manage themselves in a way that does not exhaust the supply. In a situation where one of the utilizers requires to take more than the sustainable limit, additional resources must be sought from other means or activities. As an example, if livestock are not getting the nourishment from available grazing due to a prolonged dry season but their numbers are deemed not excessive for the habitat in normal conditions, then local agriculturists (living close to permanent water sources) may increase their cash crop potential by growing alfalfa or similar crops to sell to the pastoralists or ranchers to sustain their cattle. Such examples relate to specific situations but it is the broader thinking that I am trying to explain. Such cooperation between humans, including different groups of humans, and the natural environment are what will promote greater economic, social and environmental stability and internal security.

The livestock carrying capacity of our fragile ecosystems is always a bone of contention. In my opinion, the only way to really address it is by formalizing the livestock sector. Its current informality is its own biggest threat as well as threatening the integrity of the many national parks and other protected areas that are increasingly being abused, and no longer just in times of drought but constantly. This would also prompt the need for new and more economically viable breeds; "less is more" is the secret for livestock owners to

increase their prosperity from their existing wealth; both the domestic and export markets are waiting in the wings. Range management is of course a vital component to finding a workable answer to this challenge. The introduction of water to areas devoid of it is a double edged sword and can in some cases add to human instability if not planned correctly with the right levels of rural law enforcement and security.

What has been the most outstanding aspect of the Wildlife and Conservation management act of 2013?

The Wildlife and Conservation Management Act of 2013 seeks to improve governance through improved participation of land owners and the public at large in the conservation and management of wildlife and habitat, through enhanced engagement in the wider conservation decision making process and providing space for wildlife and accessing benefits that accrue from user rights. The other milestone was the recognition that majority of wildlife exists outside protected areas. The Act recognizes wildlife conservancies and defines them as land set aside by individual landowner, body corporate, a group of land owners or a community for purposes of conservation and other environmentally sustainable industries such as managing livestock. This is affirmed by the principle that recognizes wildlife conservation and management on public, private and community land as a recognized form of land use. Thus, alongside the new community lands legislation, the Wildlife Act will give greater security of tenure to rural people who choose to develop their land as a conservancy. This to me is one of the most important aspects of the Act since it seeks community ownership in conservation best practice to directly benefit the constituents. In addition it sets the stage for a potential multiplier effect across many sectors that can constitute an emerging rural economy resulting in both wildlife and humans finding a greater level of harmonization.

How can the youth in Kenya be involved in conservation and rural development?

It's sad to witness the continuing influx of young people from rural areas to urban areas in a desperate bid to avoid poverty in search of a living that only a few are ever able to make. I strongly believe that the devolved system of government needs to put greater emphasis on development of our rural economies, including through nature-based enterprises. This can be achieved by enacting and implementing policies that will unravel the economic potential of our rural areas and developing our rural areas as attractive for sustainable investment. We need to make the youth proud of being from their village or being rural Kenyans and not be looked at as washamba if they have not gone to the city. This will not happen overnight and will involve a shift in attitude and approaches to business but it is essential if we are to stem the rural brain drain and to have peace and stability in rural Kenya.

Any encouraging word to Kenyans and the World at large?

I suppose many of your readers will be surprised that I have not written much directly about wildlife and traditional conservation, instead I have focused on all of us, as we humans are the planets dominant species. Ultimately, if we humans want wildlife to survive, then it will; if we don't want it to survive, then wildlife doesn't stand a chance. That's why we need to focus on people in order to conserve wildlife and the natural environment. As humans we live in a world created by our forbears that, due to human nature and our inbuilt survival tendencies results in competition. I am not saying that competition is negative, on the contrary in fact. And competition is not unique to humans of course but as the species that has evolved to a level that has given us the deciding power over many aspects of the planet's future, I believe we have a certain responsibility to manage our competitiveness with respect to the natural environment.

The human interaction with the natural world is often termed "environmental management"; in my view this term, and many like it, are essentially misleading. If it were not for humans, the wildlife and the natural environment would manage itself, and it is the impact of us humans that has resulted in the need for "management"; it is us who are the threat and so we are the element that requires better management.

As humans, we have a responsibility to mitigate the threat that we pose towards the natural world to an acceptable level; in other words, to ensure our impact is sustainable in the long term.

The TsavoCon approach, Stabilization through Conservation is to primarily manage the core threat to the environment, "ourselves", and to create geographical areas that are conducive to holistic success thus creating the sort of environment where the natural world, wildlife and habitat can thrive alongside humans; put quite simply: if humans are doing well in these areas, the wildlife will do well too.

CONSERVATION AMY ROLL

PROMOTING CONSERVATION

Through Transboundary Cooperation

Ecosystems exist across different borders, cultures and management systems. Transboundary conservation has emerged as a practical way to address these different contexts and encourage cooperation from governments to meet shared conservation goals. Bordering Uganda and Kenya is Mount Elgon National Park. Both countries and the United Nations recognize the significance of the park's ecosystem as a water catchment and biodiversity area.

Despite government protection of Mount Elgon, the national park continues to face threats on both the Kenya and Uganda side. Rising population pressure from communities living around the national park results in unsustainable agricultural practices, land degradation, forest offtake for fuelwood, and poaching. Poor sanitation and hygiene practices continue to contaminate the Mount Elgon water sources. These threats may have significant negative environmental, ecological and

social impacts.

Cooperation among Kenya and Uganda governments and the local communities to responsibly manage Mount Elgon is central to conservation of the area's biodiversity and water, and to improving the health and livelihoods of people living around the parks.

Conservation Through Public Health, a Ugandan-based grassroots nongovernmental organization, is using the Village Health and Conservation Team (VHCT) model to implement conservation activities in Mount Elgon National Park in Uganda. The VHCT model merges ecosystem management and community health programs into one model by training Village Health Teams to implement conservation activities through their public health outreach. CTPH trains VHCTs to act as model change agents delivering messages through household visits, community

health and conservation talks and creating model households with sanitary equipment and improved cookstoves. They promote family planning, hygiene and sanitation, infectious disease referrals and nutrition; and record incidences of human and wildlife interaction and conflict, as well as, improving community attitudes to conservation and promoting energy saving cook stoves. Each month VHCTs send data on health and conservation indicators to Ministries of Health and national park authorities.

With generous funding from the Global Development Network, CTPH is planning to

scale the VHCT model and adapt it to the Kenya side of Mount Elgon. Sharing benefits and best practices of this program will contribute to better transboundary management of Mount Elgon. CTPH hopes that the VHCT model will continue to inform policymakers and encourage the creation of programs that value ecosystem and human health over political boundaries. Strengthening government processes from local to national to enable transboundary cooperation will help to conserve important flora and fauna while contributing to poverty alleviation and climate change resilience in rural communities.



Advocacy and Partnerships Coordinator,
Conservation Through Public Health,
www.ctph.org



BirdLasser Kenya

Lejint Lifestyle

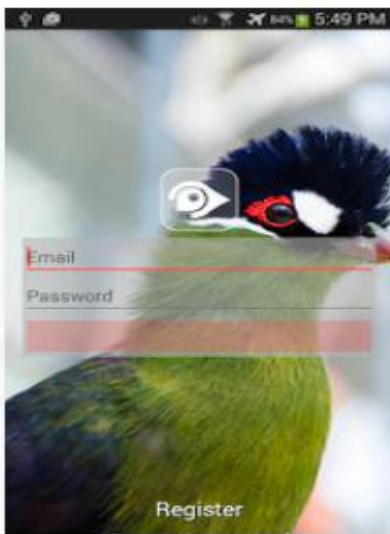
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The Kenya Bird Map has been mapping birds since the year 2013. The project aims at renewing the distribution maps for all birds species in Kenya. The last atlas for Kenya's birds was published in the year 1989 and a lot of changes have occurred since, making it very timely to have a new atlas. The Kenya Bird Map allows all birders in Kenya to take part in this citizen-science project by sharing the birds they see or hear. Mapping is done in small grid squares, called Pentads, which are overlaid on the map of Kenya. A pentad represents an area of 9 km by 9 km on the ground.

The project has launched a bird mapping application that allows you to map birds on your mobile devices. The app is available for free download on Android Devices. An iPhone version is currently being tested and will also be released for public use soon. This application enable you to map birds as you see or hear them and then upload them onto the Kenya Bird Map website database-all from your phone.

It is that quick and easy! You should be all set in a few minutes. It is advisable that you have stable internet connection during

installation. Once installed, the app will work well offline; and the only other time you will need internet is when

How to download and install your app on Google Play Store:

- Search for the app ("BirdLasser Kenya") on Google Play Store on your Android device
- Click to install "BirdLasser Kenya"
- Allow the application to download on your phone
- Once installed click the application on your screen to open it
- Click the "Sign Up" button to register
- Fill in the fields with your personal details
- A PIN will be sent to the email you provide when signing up
- Check your email, copy the PIN and proceed with the sign up
- The home screen you see will be the atlassing section
- Start by going to the settings to select your preferences and enter your name and observer number (email the Kenya Bird Map for this number) in the relevant fields
- Set the "Atlassing Mode" as the default

submitting/uploading the bird-lists to the Kenya Bird Map website.

Android App Compatibility: Requires an Android version 4.0.3 and above. Have your location settings on when using the app, to help it locate you and map birds accurately.

A more detailed BirdLasser Kenya tutorial is available from the Kenya Bird Map office.

For a copy, mapping inquiries or assistance with installing the application, kindly contact the Kenya Bird Map office on kenyabirdmap@naturekenya.org or visit the website on kenyabirdmap.adu.org.za



(washingtonwachira@gmail.com)

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CO-EXISTENCE

A complex challenge not to be left to conservationists alone

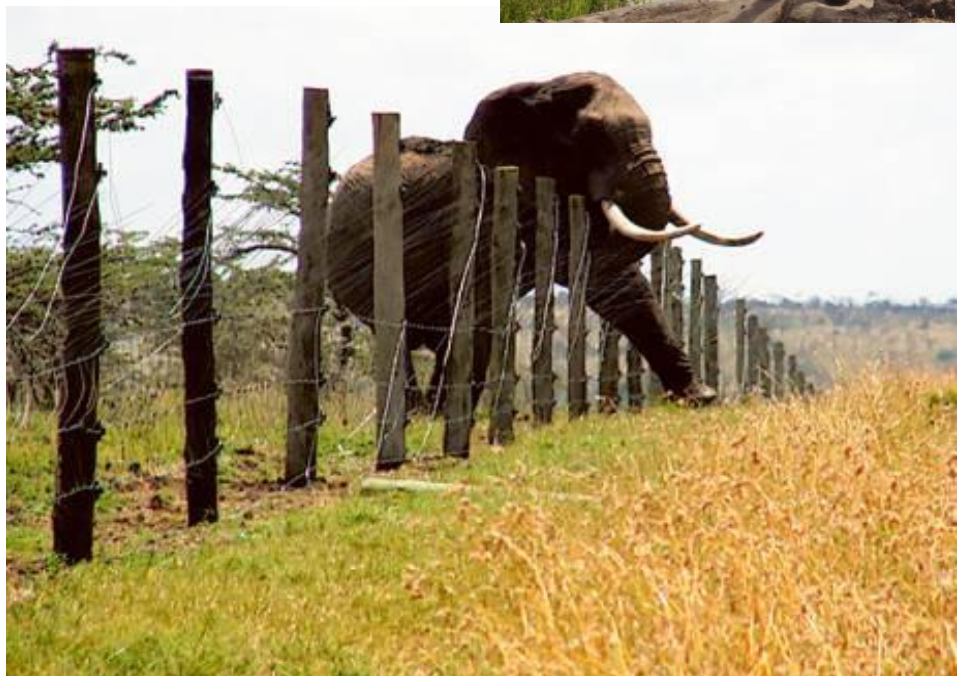
The Athi-Kaputiei Ecosystem, which encompasses Nairobi National Park at its northern tip and the Athi-Kaputiei plains (also called the Athi-Kapiti plains) south and south-east of the park, was described by early European explorers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as hosting the most spectacular concentration of wild animals in East Africa (FoNNaP, 2012). It is now however a mere shadow of its former self and its wildlife populations have dropped significantly outside of NNP. The main reason for this is the growth of towns like Athi River, Kitengela, Ongata Rongai and Kiserian that have grown rapidly over the past few decades. These towns, along with the high level of associated land subdivision and fencing that has occurred on the plains, have blocked numerous ancient migration routes and dispersal areas that once connected Nairobi National Park to Ngong Hills in the south-west and Amboseli to the south-east. The interesting thing however is that many studies (e.g. Ogutu et. al., 2016; Said et. al., 2016; and Ogutu et. al., 2013) have revealed that wildebeest, which were the most numerous herbivore species on the Athi-Kaputiei plains, have undergone a more dramatic population decline (nearly 99%) than virtually any other herbivore species. Although blockage of migration routes and loss of dispersal areas is a key factor in this, I have recently found out through discussions with various local people, that there is another factor that often tends to get little mention in the press: wildlife-borne diseases.

Wildebeest are loathed by many livestock owners due to the fact that they transmit a disease known as Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF) to cattle, which has no cure and is fatal. The disease (harmless to the wildebeest themselves and other wild ungulates) is transmitted to cattle from wildebeest afterbirth, when the cattle graze in an area that the wildebeest have recently calved. Maasai have traditionally tackled this problem by avoiding wildebeest calving areas during the calving season. Land subdivision/fragmentation and loss of rangeland has however reduced the areas where pastoralists can take their cattle to avoid the gnus and many local Maasai have now adopted more sedentary lifestyles. This shift to a more sedentary lifestyle turned a problem that was once not so bad into a very serious one as more cattle die and the economic losses increase. Many land owners have opted to fence their land off to keep the wildebeest out. Some also directly

kill wildebeest as a threat to their livestock. This has, among other factors, led to the systematic collapse of a once mighty wildebeest population that was surpassed in size only by the Serengeti-Mara population (FoNNaP, 2012; Ogutu et. al., 2013).

So, what's the solution to this? Conservancies may be one. Designating the remaining wildebeest calving zones as conservation areas that are only used by livestock in the non-calving months of the year may help to reduce transmission of MCF and hence reduce the economic losses made due to cattle deaths. Eco-tourism (including bird watching) can also be set up in these areas to provide an economic incentive to land owners to keep their land open as a wildebeest calving area. This would also improve their attitude and tolerance toward the wildebeest. This is however easier said than done as the next question one would naturally ask is, where would they take their livestock during the wildebeest calving season? It's a complex challenge that requires collaboration between various land owners to come up with well thought out grazing strategies. This may involve, for instance, land owners in areas where wildebeest don't calve allowing others to graze their livestock on their land during

the calving season and then in turn being allowed to graze their livestock in the calving area during non-calving months. This then brings up questions of livestock carrying capacity, willingness of people to limit the number of livestock they own, the amount of pasture available after for cattle after wildebeest leave the calving ground, etc. Over 60% of wildlife in Kenya live outside national parks and reserves. If Kenya is really committed to securing wildlife populations outside of parks and reserves by fostering human-wildlife co-existence, people must realize that this is an extremely complex issue that requires the involvement of all sorts of sectors and professions; from ecologists to economists, sociologists, industrialists, politicians and everything in-between. Leaving it simply to 'conservationists' is a disaster waiting to happen.



GREY PARROT



The African grey parrot is a medium-sized, predominantly grey, black-billed parrot which weighs 400 g, with a length of 33 cm and an average wingspan of 46–52 cm. They are darker grey over the head and both wings, while the head and body feathers have a slight white edge to them. The tail feathers are red. The Timneh subspecies is a darker grey and has a dark maroon colored tail as well as having a portion of their beak being light pink in color. Both sexes appear similar. The coloration of juveniles is similar to that of adults, but the eye is typically dark grey to black, in comparison to the yellow irises around dark eyes of the adult birds.

The African grey parrot is native to equatorial Africa, including Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda. The species is found inside a range from Kenya to the eastern part of the Ivory Coast. Between 120,100 and 259,000 Timneh African gray parrots remain worldwide. The species seems to favor dense forests, but can also be found at forest edges and in more open vegetation types (gallery and savanna forests).

African grey parrots may live for 40–60 years in captivity, although their mean lifespan in the wild appears to be shorter at about 23 years.

African grey parrots are monogamous breeders which nest in tree cavities. Each couple of parrots needs its own tree to nest. The hen lays three to five eggs, which she incubates for 30 days while being fed by her mate. The adults defend their nesting sites. Both parents help take care of the chicks until they can go off on their own. African grey parrot chicks require

feeding and care from their parents in the nest. The parents take care of them until four or five weeks after they are fledged. Young leave the nest at the age of 12 weeks. Little is known about the courtship behavior of this species in the wild. They weigh between 12 and 14 g at hatching and between 372 and 526 g when they leave their parents.

They are mostly frugivorous; most of their diet consists of fruit, nuts, and seeds. The species prefers oil palm fruit and also eat flowers and tree bark, as well as insects and snails. In the wild, the African grey is partly a ground feeder. In captivity, it can eat sunflower seeds, bird pellets, a variety of fruits such as pears, orange, pomegranate, apple, and banana, and vegetables such as carrots, cooked sweet potato, celery, fresh kale, peas, and green beans. They also need a source of calcium.

The natural predators for this species include as palm-nut vultures, as well as a number of raptors; monkeys target eggs and the young for food. African grey parrots in captivity have been observed to be susceptible to fungal infections, bacterial infections, nutritional insufficiency, malignant tumors, psittacine beak and feather disease, tapeworms, and blood-worms.

Humans are by far the largest threat to wild African grey populations. Between 1994 and 2003, over 359,000 African grey parrots were traded on the international market. Around 21% of the population of the wild birds are being harvested every year. Mortality rates are extremely high after they are captured until they reach market, ranging from 60 to 66%. Mortality among imported birds is high. This bird is

also hunted for its meat and for its parts are used in traditional medicines. As a result of the extensive harvest of wild birds, in addition to habitat loss, this species is believed to be undergoing a rapid decline in the wild and has therefore been rated as vulnerable by the IUCN.

In October 2016, the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Fauna and Flora (CITES) extended the highest level of protection to African greys by listing the species under appendix 1, which bans global and domestic trade in the species.



African greys are also highly intelligent, having been shown to perform at the cognitive level of a 4- to 6-year-old child in some tasks. New experiments have shown that African greys can learn number sequences and can associate human voices with those humans' faces. The species is common in captivity and is regularly kept by humans as a companion parrot, prized for its ability to mimic human speech, which makes it one of the most popular avian pets.[1]

They are notorious for mimicking noises around their environment and using them tirelessly.



The Coral Reefs



Venture to the Indian Ocean and discover a myriad of sea creatures. Amongst the fish, plankton, and other wonders, one cannot forget the coral. For anyone who dive, they can find a variety of types of coral in this vast ocean. The Indian Ocean's coral populations may actually rival the Great Barrier Reef of Australia.

These amazing creatures of the sea are essential for the balance of ecosystems beneath the surface of the waters. While the algae that lives inside the coral uses light to produce food, the coral itself is home to many other living beings in the ocean. With the changes brought on by global warming and disruption by humans, the Indian Ocean has show promise with resilient species of coral.

What are corals?

Small (0.25-12 inches), soft-bodied marine organisms called polyps that live in spectacular colonies called reefs that they build using a limestone skeleton (calicle) lying at their base. A polyp - which may live for 2 to several hundreds of years - starts building a reef by fixing itself to a sea-floor rock, and then budding into innumerable clones that fuse into each other to create a colony that acts as one organism. The colonies grow over thousands of years, and fuse into other colonies to become reefs. Some of today's coral reefs started growing over 50 million years ago. Corals themselves are translucent animals related to sea anemones and jellyfish, but the reefs host zooxanthellae algae, which give them a range of dazzling colours. The algae have a symbiotic relationship with the polyps, capturing sunlight and carbon dioxide to make sugars that feed the polyps. The corals also feed on zooplankton and small fish.

Types of corals found in Indian Ocean

Blister Coral, also known as *Horastrea indica*, is only found in the Indian Ocean. It is located in the western portion off of Madagascar and Tanzania, to name only

a few locations. This species of coral is pale brown and is covered with discs that are blue-grey. It grows best in areas where there are sandy reefs. Currently, this type of coral is being threatened by global warming, fishing practices, and pollution

Porites Profunda grow in colonies and have straight branches that taper off as they extend their reach. They are brown or grey, are pale on the outside, and have dark centers. They are a rare form of coral.

There are four types of coral reefs in the Indian Ocean which are the habitats for various species. They include fringing reefs, barrier reefs, atolls, and platform reefs. Each are teeming with life.

The *Saya Del Malha* coral reef boasts of being the largest submerged bank in the world. Coral grows in the midst of a sea grass meadow of considerable size.

The Great Chagos Bank, the largest coral atoll in the world, contains over 200 varieties of coral. Stony corals located in the Indian Ocean include *Sinularia*, *Gonophore*, and *Favia*. A few soft corals include *Dendronephthya* and *Nephthya*. Other corals found in the depths include blue corals, red organpipe corals, and fire corals.

Why do corals matter?

A coral reef is like an oasis in a desert. Corals provide both food and shelter for a staggering amount of marine life. Although coral reef ecosystems represent less than 0.1% of the area of the ocean, approximately 25% of all marine species relies on them. They are especially important as a nursery for juvenile fish until they are large enough to venture into open-ocean. Losing a coral reef can have a dramatic impact on local food, fisheries and livelihoods. About 500 million people globally depend on such fisheries.

What is Coral Bleaching

Coral bleaching is the process by which corals lose their coloration and turn a ghostly white. This happens when they become overly stressed especially when exposed to warmer than normal temperatures and excessive sunlight (normally over 4-6 weeks).

When corals bleach they are actually expelling the brown algae that they grow within their body tissues. Corals expel the algae because high temperatures cause the algae to produce toxic compounds. The expulsion of the algae makes the corals appear a brilliant white - which is due to skeletons being visible through their translucent coral tissue.

Bleaching and Climate change

Coral bleaching is one of the most visual indicators of thermal stress due to climate change. It is a phenomenon caused by ocean warming. The oceans have absorbed 93% of the heat from climate change and are now significantly warmer than they were 50 year ago. The heat that is causing reefs to turn white represents the momentum of climate change - it will increasingly impact our weather, climate and rainfall for decades to come until a new equilibrium is reached. This hidden energy could also trigger runaway heating if the ocean's methane deposits are released. It is why coral reefs are often referred to as "the canary in the coalmine."

How common is coral bleaching?

It is becoming increasingly common as a direct result of warming oceans, which are now significantly warmer than they were 50 years ago. Some bleaching has been reported every summer in recent years, a very visible indicator of climate change..

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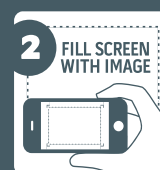
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Connecting the urban young to nature.

With its hustles and bustles, and the little green spaces available for leisure taken up for developmental purposes, urban areas offer little opportunities for young people to interact with nature.

Young people are the change agents of tomorrow and they should not be lulled into false complacency on matters concerning the environment. It is therefore essential for them to understand how changes in the environment will affect them in the offing.

Environmental education is of essence in connecting the young people residing in Nairobi closer to nature. It recognizes the potential held by young people if they are adequately equipped with knowledge in environmental issues.

Through a partnership with A Rocha Kenya and The African Fund For Endangered Wildlife, I work with various schools in Nairobi county towards nurturing environmental interests, creating awareness and achieving the sustainable development goals: Goal 2: zero hunger, Goal 13: climate action and Goal 15: life on land.

On Conservation agriculture; a climate change

adaptation strategy, the young people are equipped with knowledge on its principles such as mulching and planting cover crops as a way of conserving both the soil and water, addition of nutrients to the soil through inter-cropping, compost making to minimize the usage of chemicals such as herbicides and pesticides as well as minimization of disturbances of the soil biota through zero or minimized tillage.

To reduce the impacts of waste disposal on land, they are equipped with knowledge on the 3Rs (reducing, reusing and recycling). This particularly applies to plastics which are non-biodegradable and pollute the air with gases that are harmful to human health such as dioxin and styrene released when plastics burn as well as the effect of these plastics on biodiversity in water bodies and on land.

On the conservation of forest biodiversity, the young people are educated on the impacts of deforestation on forest biodiversity, climate and human beings which is in accordance with goal number 15 that aims at sustainable management of forests, combating of

deforestation, halting and reversing land degradation as well as biodiversity loss.

Environmental education is therefore an essential process for recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and added tools necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relationship among man, his culture and his bio-physical surrounding which every young person residing in Nairobi needs to acknowledge.



(clairenasike.cn@gmail.com)

COP22 MOROCCO JONATHAN ODONGO

What happened in Marrakech?



The 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the UNFCCC took place in Marrakech, Morocco from 7th to 19th November 2016.

Here are the highlights of what happened in Marrakech:

Ratification of Paris Agreement. By the end of the conference, 111 countries had ratified the Agreement. By 9th December, 117 parties had ratified the agreement.

Marrakech Action Proclamation (MAP)

The nations present at Marrakech issued the MAP highlighting the urgency of action and reaffirming their determination and commitment to implement the Paris Agreement.

Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

Governments and non-state actors launched the partnership that brings the two within the same

platform to step up climate action by sharing successes, lessons and best practices.

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) commits to go 100% renewable.

The CVF pledged to "strive to meet 100% domestic renewable energy production as rapidly as possible, while working to end energy poverty and protect water and food security".

African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI)

The initiative that aims to accelerate the harnessing of Africa's huge renewable energy potential to improve access to clean and affordable energy while simultaneously creating jobs, advanced in Marrakech after receiving support and financial pledges. AREI targets to mobilize the potential to generate 300 gigawatts by 2030

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative (REEEI) for Sustainable Development

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) launched REEEI to scale up the provision of renewable energy while promoting energy efficiency. "The initiative will enable LDCs to leapfrog fossil fuel based energy and light up the lives of millions of energy-starved people through modern, clean and resilient energy systems," said Mr. Mpanu-Mpanu, the outgoing Chair of the LDC Group.

Agriculture

The talks to include agriculture in the negotiations stalled. Meanwhile, Adaptation of African Agriculture Initiative, an initiative that aims to build the resilience

of farmers in Africa gathered momentum in Morocco.

Capacity Building

The Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) is now set to help poor nations improve how they account and report their emissions.

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Partnership

The NDC Partnership launched during COP22 brings together more than 40 countries and major institutions to accelerate the implementation of NDCs.

Finance

\$50 million was pledged towards Capacity Building, \$23 million for technology and over \$80 million towards the Adaptation Fund. The developed countries recommitted to the \$100 billion Green Climate Fund.

2050 Pathways Platform

US, Canada, Mexico and Germany shared their mid-century strategies to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Other countries, cities, states, regions and companies joined the initiative and promised to initiate their own plans. The platform will support countries seeking to develop long-term deep decarbonization strategies, including through the sharing of resources, knowledge and experiences.

What next?

2018 remains the most important year when countries will take stock of progress and review their action plans ahead of finalization of the rulebook for the Paris Agreement. COP 23 will be held in Germany from 6th to 17th November 2017 under the presidency of Fiji.

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2016 SET TO BE HOTTEST YEAR ON RECORD

The year 2016 is likely to be the warmest year since records began. According to provisional data, global temperature has already risen by around 1.2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times.

The year 2016 looks likely to set new temperature records. The two previous years each set new records for highest average global temperature since precise measurements were first taken in 1880.

According to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the planet's temperature above land and sea averaged 14.94 degrees Celsius from January to November - 0.06 degrees warmer than the same period last year.

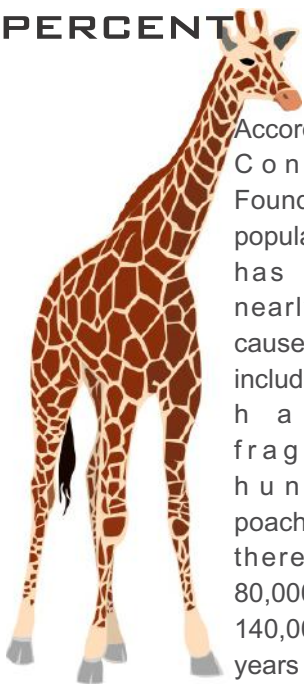
The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) also predicts 2016 is likely to be the hottest year on record. According to UN estimates, the global temperature in 2016 was 14.88 degrees - 1.2 degrees higher than before the industrial revolution began in the mid-19th century. Data from the WMO put the average global temperature between 1961 and 1990 at 14 degrees.

The British Met Office also projected that 2017 was likely to be the third-warmest year, behind 2016 and 2015.

KENYA AND DENMARK LAUNCH KSHS 7 BILLION GROWTH PROGRAMME

Denmark will provide financial and technical support worth Kshs7 billion towards inclusive greener growth with higher employment and will focus on sustainable growth and sustainable use of Natural resources. Prof Judi Wakhungu the Cabinet secretary for Environment and Natural resources lauded the Danish Government for its support through the promotion of green growth opportunities, that are geared towards simulating growth based on green solutions and employment generation in the Country.

GIRAFFE NUMBERS DOWN BY 40 PERCENT



According to Giraffe Conservation Foundation, Giraffe population in Africa has reduced by nearly 40%. The causes of this decline include habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, hunting and poaching. Currently there are nearly 80,000 giraffes from 140,000 giraffes 15 years ago.

WANGARI MAATHAI ROAD



Governor Evans Kidero of Nairobi County renamed Forest road after the Late Professor Wangari Maathai in recognition of the Nobel Laureate's tireless campaign to protect and conserve the environment.

Dr. Kidero said, "It is good to recognize her work. Without Maathai, land grabbers could have taken Uhuru park and Karura forest.



COURT FOR UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

Uganda is to set up a wildlife court to hear wildlife related cases and punish offenders. Dr Andrew Seguya the Director General of Ugand Wildlife Authority said "the move is aimed at protecting Uganda's wildlife".

HFC'S GAS BAN

More than 150 counties met in Kigali the capital city of Rwanda for talks on hydrofluorocarbons (HFC'S) gases used in air conditioners and refrigerators that

are far more potent than carbon dioxide. A deal was reached to cap and reduce use of HFC's. A gradual process beginning in 2019 was agreed by developed countries including United States of America and Developing countries including China in 2024. The Kigali deal agreed by 197 countries is legally binding and has an agreement by rich countries to help poor countries to adapt their technologies.

SOLAR POWERED CONCRETE



A research team from the University of Kassel recently developed a building material that simultaneously functions as photovoltaic cell. Important components of this new material are electrographic concrete and liquids such as fruit juices. In future DysCrete is supposed to be used for the construction of facades and at the same time transform solar energy into electric power. DysCrete consists of a special electrographic concrete,

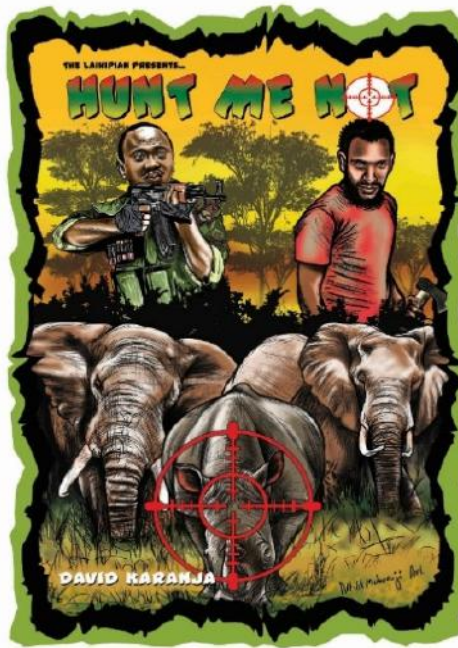
which is coated with layers of titanium dioxide, organic liquid, an electrolyte, graphite and a transparent surface. The research is led by Prof. Heike Klusmann Head of Visual Art studies at the University of Kassel and Thorsten Klooster, project manager of the field.



STOP POACHING.

Poet Jay 254

Gun shots in the dark evil night
Poachers with torches to provide light
My fellow elephant is dead blood on the ground
We are surrounded by poachers all round
Yesterday they killed rhinos about fifty
We can't risk we have to run for safety
Birds are scared they fly high in the air
The gun shots are too loud to bare
Long ago Nairobi national park was safe
Now poaching day by day we face
They hunt us all night till it is dusk
All in search of my precious task
They want us dead so we live in fear
Selling our products from Kenya to India
The forest are crying they are shedding tears
Bush meat they need they kill a deer
Kenya was safe but now its the worst
Poaching everywhere spreading very fast
Kenya wildlife was among the best
What of now? animals lie dead in the forest
When caught they bribe the evil courts
Poachers are now free heads high they boast
Trees you burn in need of charcoal
Now look the forest is empty like a hall
Plastics all over the National park
On our throat they are now stuck
can't you humans let us live in peace
Our land you build houses stealing piece by piece
Justice for our wildlife we now seek
#STOPPOACHING our voice we speak



"Hunt Me Not" is a production of the Laikipian which is a youth led social enterprise based in Nanyuki town. The Laikipian and Sikika community Based Organization designed a revolutionary project called, "Fahamisha" which is Swahili for "To inform". The project entails use of art for conservation awareness.

Book review

BOOK REVIEW

"Hunt me Not" is a comic book that highlights the complex web of poaching activities in the African Savanna. Leshan a reformed poacher is hired to become a game ranger at OI Japeta ranch, this sends a chilling a message to both the poaching world and informants in OI Japeta who are not sure of why Leshan's change of heart.

In an operation to flush out poachers within the ranch, Letaito is suspected to be engaged in a suspicious activity and in the process of flushing out poachers in the Ranch, Laito is hit by a blunt object but miraculously survives and and Letaito is captured to be one of the poachers, after an intense interrogation by Police and OI Japeta management he agrees to give out information about the poaching web in exchange of a lighter sentence.

"Hunt me not" is an awesome, educative, innovative way of creating awareness on poaching and conservation. Digital copies of the comic book is available on google play store, Apple, Kobo, 24 symbols and 254 comics. Hard copies are available in the Laikipian offices in Nanyuki town offices and Between The Links-Village market. Visit (www.laikipiaonline.co.ke) for more information on the comic book.



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THE *bio*

Christine Sayo

I am Christine Sayo, a third born in a family of four hailing from a small village called Emmutsa in Vihiga County. I first enrolled in Emmutsa primary schools before transferring to Maseno Girls boarding primary school.

My passion for volunteering begun as a secondary school student at Kenya High, whereby I actively participated in activities organized within the school. I later joined Moi University where I enrolled for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Linguistics, Media and Communication. After my graduation in 2010 I continued to engage and participate in various volunteering courses across Kenya.

In 2012 I enrolled for my Masters of Arts in Communication in the University of Nairobi with my thesis being "The role of media in creating environmental awareness". In the same year I was lucky to be part of team that produced the premier environment shows that aired on Kenya Television Network (KTN) titled Project green and Eco-journal which are available on Youtube. During the production of the documentaries I came face to face with the harsh reality of how the constituents are ignorant on issues related to climate change and its impact to their lives. I therefore took it upon myself to educate people on what climate change is all about through town hall meetings and contributing articles for publication in the main stream media and social media not forgetting participating in various clean ups and tree planting exercises in order to raise the much needed awareness.

I recommend volunteerism to any one because there is a lot of knowledge, networks and exposure that one gets. Volunteers are approximated to contribute to at least 3% of Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which goes a long way in enhancing Kenya's development process. Recently a volunteerism policy was launched in Kenya which gives a great impetus to volunteerism sector as it provides a way of quantifying and qualify volunteer work as well as ensure the protection of volunteer involving organizations and beneficiaries of volunteer activities.

Starting next year (2017) we will be laying ground for the World Cleanup Day set for September 8, 2018 under the Let's Do It World Campaign.

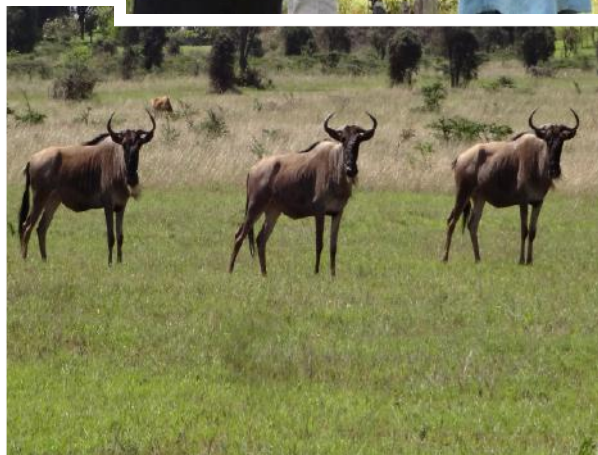
I invite interested parties to join us by registering through this link https://docs.google.com/a/jci.cc/forms/d/1YMkb1td26Xm2qnbbCn1Ibj2Dnqu6t-lpjL896UPRqA0/edit?usp=forms_home&ths=true

There is so much good that comes from giving, try it out today, VOLUNTEER!!



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