



For lions. For people. Forever.



Ewaso Lions is a grassroots project in northern Kenya whose mission is to promote the conservation of lions through applied research and community-based outreach programmes.

Formed in 2007, Ewaso Lions investigates the ecological and social factors affecting the lion population in protected areas and community lands within the Ewaso Nyiro ecosystem. The research will guide the long-term conservation management of this area.

Ewaso Lions puts education and capacity building at the forefront of our conservation efforts.



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## Message from Ewaso Lions

Ewaso Lions has had an extremely busy few months and the project is undergoing exciting change and growth. In this Field Report, we highlight a mix of major challenges and hopeful opportunities.

Intense rains have been hard on Camp, but welcome for the landscape. New cubs were born in Samburu and Buffalo Springs National Reserves (page 2). Warrior Watch continues to expand its reach, and Jeneria did a superb job speaking about the programme at the annual Kenya Wildlife Service Carnivore Research & Conservation Conference in Nairobi (page 5). The two of us are busy with our

degrees and are looking forward to completing them in May.

*Africa Geographic* magazine featured Ewaso Lions in its August issue, and Warrior Watch made the Guardian's Green Travel List for 2011 (see page 6). This has led to some nice exposure for the project and Samburu.

We hope you enjoy reading more about these and other updates from the field! And, as always, we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

-- Shivani and Paul



### Did you know:

Human-lion conflict is the number one threat to lions in the Ewaso Nyiro ecosystem.

At the current rate of loss, Kenya's lions will be extinct in 20 years.

Left: One of the last photos taken of Magilani shows her injuries. Photo by Paul Munroe.

## Lion Update

Lions in the region fared well during the dry season mid-year. They spent a significant amount of time along the river during this period. As soon as the rains arrived in October, lions began to move from the core areas of the Reserves into neighbouring areas. Most of the females have cubs and the males are frequently moving between prides. Currently, we are monitoring about 40 individual lions over our 900 km<sup>2</sup> study area.

### Magilani's Injury and Disappearance

For three years we have closely monitored a resident lioness, Magilani, in Westgate Community

Conservancy. Magilani's presence in Westgate is extremely important for the community and visitors that are fortunate enough to see her. In June, Magilani was found with severe injuries and has not been seen since. The source of her injuries, whether caused by animal or human, is unknown.

Magilani's cubs, Ltanganoi and Sikiria, are 1.5 years old and old enough to survive independently. The cubs spend the majority of their time in Mpus Kutuk.

Our Lion Scouts have worked closely with rangers from Westgate and Mpus Kutuk Conservancy to locate her. Our team is not giving up and will continue to look for her in the

hope that she survived and we can identify the cause of her injury.

### New Cubs in the Reserves

Nashipai and Nabo, the most well-known lionesses in the Reserves, mated with the two resident males, Lguret and Loirish. They gave birth to four cubs in June. Nabo's two cubs are doing well, but unfortunately Nashipai's two young ones did not survive. Since then, she left Nabo's companionship and moved to the western part of Samburu Reserve. Regrettably, she has preyed on a number of stray camels during this wet season and we hope she moves back into the safer core areas soon.

In Buffalo Springs, Jalalo, the resident female from the Ngare Mara Pride, gave birth to two cubs in April. The other three females, Kofafeth, Jabdu, and Korti, also gave birth and we now have eight little cubs within the Reserves.

Loirish and Lguret are almost five years old and have been in the Reserves for more than three years. We expect new males to arrive in the area soon and try to push out these two long-term residents, which is the norm for male territoriality.

## Human-Predator Conflict Study

From June through October, Paul conducted his study to investigate the factors shaping human-predator conflict in Westgate as part of his Masters degree at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies.

The study builds from ongoing Ewaso Lions conflict work, and aims to illuminate methods to reduce conflict. Ngila, the Ewaso Lions Community Officer, covered much ground as he interviewed livestock owners following incidents of predator attacks on livestock. We will share more news from the study as it unfolds.

## 'Running For Lions' Marathon

The second annual 'Running for Lions' half-marathon took place in Westgate Conservancy in May. Organized and sponsored by Ewaso Lions, Carter Safaris, and Sasaab Lodge, the race attracted more than 100 participants from the area. The event's goal is to increase awareness of lions and their importance, while promoting community cohesion and fun. In other running news, two warriors from Warrior Watch participated in the Peace Marathon in Kom and attained good positions. In June, Ewaso Lions Scout Moses Letitiya also ran the half-marathon in Lewa and finished in an excellent position.



## Camera Traps

We have five camera traps deployed in the Conservation Area to take daily records of rare and/or nocturnal creatures that are not easily seen during game drives. We have been fortunate to capture images of all predators, including leopards, jackals, lions, hyenas, and wild dogs. Even rarely seen creatures such as aardvarks and honey badgers have been recorded.

Our camera traps also revealed the various night raiders assailing our kitchen. White-tailed mongooses (left), aggressive porcupines, and egg-loving genets have all been caught red-handed!

Want to sponsor a camera trap? See page 6.

## Cheetahs, Leopards & Wild Dogs

**African wild dog** sightings have continued to increase in both Westgate and the Reserves. We know of at least two packs that are roaming the area – a pack of 14 and another pack of 21. Nowadays it is not uncommon for these wonderful canids to run by Camp!

Although we see **cheetah** tracks often, we have only had two sightings to date in Westgate. Cheetah

sightings in the Reserves have also increased over the past few months.

**Leopard** sightings have also been frequent during the past six months. Our Scouts and camera traps have recorded two leopards, a male and a female, near our camp, and we finally sighted them mating in July. Another female leopard with a young cub (pictured right) was spotted in the Conservation Area in July and November.

**Spotted and Striped hyenas** have

been seen regularly in the Conservation Area. We have recorded a few waterbuck kills made by hyenas over the past few months.



## Renovation of Park Entrance



The gate before renovation.

Ewaso Lions, in collaboration with Sasaab Lodge, Westgate Conservancy, and Samburu County Council, funded and oversaw the painting of the West Gate entrance to Samburu National Reserve. Following the success of the wall painting at Uaso Bridge, we worked with partners and an artist to completely revitalize the park entrance. Visitors and locals alike appreciate the brightly renovated gate.



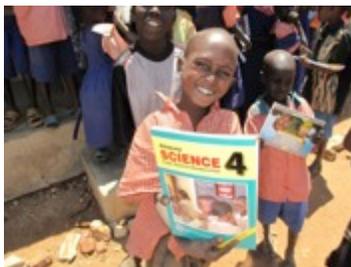
The gate after renovation.

## Support to Local Schools

### Wildlife Club & Simba Library

Using sales from the Ewaso Lions book *Simba Stories*, we were able to purchase binoculars, bird and mammal guides, and storage cases for the Wildlife Club at Lpus Leluai Primary School.

We also secured books from the Desai Foundation and other well-wishers, including Sasaab Lodge, to equip the Simba Library with more books (right, top). More recently, we also supplied Sukuroi Pre-School with some colouring books and stationery.



### Kids on Safari

Between April and July, we facilitated two safaris for children from Lpus Leluai Primary School into Samburu National Reserve as part of our Kenyan Kids on Safari programme. One safari was with guests from Sasaab Lodge and the second included students from the Wildlife Club at the primary school (left, bottom).

In total, 32 students visited Samburu during these safaris and had an exciting close encounter with lions and other wildlife. Most of these children had never even been inside the park!

## Warrior Watch

Following the expansion of the Warrior Watch programme in January, we held a 3-day workshop with rangers and warriors from Mpus Kutuk and Westgate Conservancies in June. The training session covered topics including conflict mitigation, predator ecology, tracking, wildlife monitoring, and much more.

With the support of Sasaab Lodge, we also brought a team of 20 rangers and warriors into the Reserve for a close-up wildlife experience. They were extremely fortunate to see a 2-week old lion cub, three lions chasing a leopard, the two resident male lions, as well as many other wildlife species.



“We are proud of our wildlife and let us all be the messengers of conservation”

-- Lpuresi Lenawasae, Warrior Watch

Left: Shivani reviews the importance of predator ecology during the Ranger and Warrior Watch training, June, 2011.

## Staff News

### Volunteers

**Taylor Tully** (right) spent four months interning with us earlier this year. In August he returned to help run things in camp while Paul and Shivani were out of country. He is supervising the scouts, helping with data collection and analysis, and getting experience running a camp.

**Heather Gurd** also returned to Samburu to help with data management in June and July. We really appreciate all her hard work and superb efforts over the past year.

**Nilanga Jayasinghe** has recently joined the Ewaso Lions team to work on the project from Washington D.C., raising our profile and exploring new partnerships and development opportunities. Welcome, Nilanga!

### New Camp Cook

We have a new cook in camp, **Letupukwa** (below). He comes from the Wamba area and we are happy to have him join the team.



### Africa Geographic

The Ewaso Lions team was excited to be featured in the August issue of the *Africa Geographic* magazine (pictured right). Science Editor Tim Jackson did a superb job of capturing what Ewaso Lions is all about. The article helped introduce a lot of readers to the project, and is available on our website.

## In the Media



community projects worldwide that genuinely give back to the local people and the destination.” Warrior Watch is one of only 25 projects selected from hundreds of nominations by readers of the Guardian and Greentraveller.co.uk.

### The 2011 Guardian Green Travel List

Ewaso Lions’ Warrior Watch programme, in conjunction with Sasaab Lodge, is listed as one of this

year’s 25 most innovative projects in the Guardian’s Green Travel List for 2011. The list was compiled by a panel of experts who were looking for “authentic

### The Asian Weekly

Shivani was interviewed for the May issue of *The Asian Weekly*, a Kenyan magazine. Please contact us if you would like a copy of this interview, which focuses on the founding of Ewaso Lions.

## Coming Up...

### New Website

We are putting the finishing touches on a brand new, fully redesigned website for Ewaso Lions! Months in the making, the new site (below) will better showcase the latest news from the field, photos and videos, and integrate our blog and social media. Stay tuned. [www.ewasolions.org](http://www.ewasolions.org)



### Bomas

Thanks to the Born Free Foundation, National Geographic Big Cats Initiative, and African Wildlife Foundation, we can begin the Predator-Proof Boma project. Following numerous delays, we have plans to begin the project in coming months.

### Wild Knowledge

We have recently partnered with Wild Knowledge, an Oxford based organization that has created a mobile phone application, which will enable us to gather data using our mobile phones. We will be testing this system in Samburu over the next few months, and look forward to a data sheet-free future!

### Ewaso Lions Calendar

With funding from AWF, we have produced our first-ever photographic calendar. Our 2012 calendar showcases Samburu’s lions, people, and landscapes, and will be an important tool for raising awareness. Contact us if you would like to buy it: [info@ewasolions.org](mailto:info@ewasolions.org). All proceeds from the calendar go towards our Research Centre Fund.



## Active Sharing

### KWS & ACES Conference

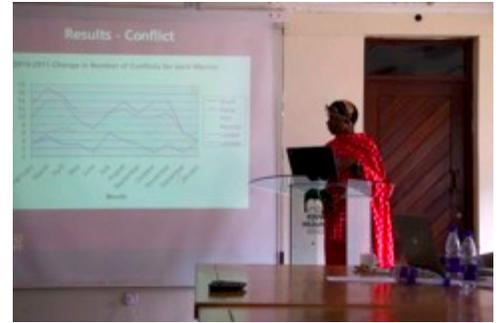
Ewaso Lions was well represented at the annual Kenya Wildlife Service Carnivore Research & Conservation Conference in July. Jeneria presented on the Warrior Watch programme and excelled at speaking in front of a large group of researchers (right).

Shivani presented the Warrior Watch

programme at the ACES Human-Wildlife Conflict conference in Scotland in August.

### Speaking to the U.S. Embassy

Hosted by Carter Safaris, Shivani gave a presentation to USAID and U.S. Embassy staff in Nairobi in April. The talk was well received and created a lot of interest in Samburu and Ewaso Lions.



Jeneria discusses trends in conflict at the KWS Conference in July.

## Funding Update

### Grants

We are extremely grateful to the National Geographic Big Cats Initiative, Born Free Foundation, and African Wildlife Foundation for funding Warrior Watch and the imminent Predator-Proof Boma project.

Extra special thanks to SeaWorld & Busch Gardens and Columbus Zoo for renewing their funding for a second year.

### Kitchen Repair

Following our blog appeal to help rebuild our destroyed kitchen, we raised the required amount of \$500. Thanks to all the readers and donors who responded so quickly and

allowed us to make our kitchen more pest-proof!

### Other Donations

Between April and October, we raised \$7,420 through our blog and individual donations. We are blown away by your support. [Thank you](#) to everyone who made a donation to help with our field efforts.

## We Need Your Help

### Research Centre Fund

Next year, we are relocating camp to an improved, long-term site! As our project expands, we need a better space for Ewaso Lions to call home. We are seeking donors who have a long-term vision for predator conservation in Kenya. Please get in touch with us if you would like to help!

### Funds for a New Scout

Between 2008 and 2011, Ewaso Lions has employed three Lion Scouts in Westgate. However, we identified a gap in the Naisunyai area with regard to wildlife data. As a result, Ewaso Lions seeks to employ an additional Scout in this area. We hope to hire before the end of the year, and are currently seeking funds

to cover uniform costs, training, data sheets, and equipment, as well as the scout's salary. The cost for one year is \$2,500.

### More Camera Traps

Our camera trap work has been very effective in our continued efforts to gather more information on elusive predators. We are seeking funds for more camera traps that the Scouts can use in each of their locations. Each camera trap, inclusive of batteries, costs \$350.

### Escalating Conflict

Livestock depredation by predators has increased sharply with the arrival of the rains, with incidents happening on a daily basis. We need funds for more community outreach to reduce conflict between people and wildlife.



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