



KPSGA

NEWSLETTER

April 2012

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Members,

Greetings from the association! We have had quite a busy season and now entering the traditional low season, and I'd like to wish you all a good break. We saw fewer cases of misbehaviour by guides in the field as opposed to the previous season and I'd like to urge our members to keep displaying professional guiding ethics and set best examples in the industry.

Secondly, we are currently at a time when security, especially terrorism is a real threat to the industry. I'd like to urge all our members and the entire guiding community to observe extra caution when with clients and to work with the government security bodies should they notice any potential threat, and to heed any warning given.

Earlier in the year, I attended a Uganda Safari Guides Association (USAGA) Bronze-Level guides graduation ceremony in Kampala. It is great to note that the rest of the countries in the region have picked our Association as a role model. I have also just returned from Rwanda where I was invited together with the Chairman of USAGA by RDB to assist in setting up the grading system for Rwanda guides under RUSAGA (Rwanda Safari Guides Association) it is very encouraging to see how all the stake holders are keen to develop the

guiding standards. They are also starting the Bronze-Level exams.

Shortly, the east African region will have grading systems in each country and it is therefore important that we should not be left out.

Our AGM will be in a couple of months, and I request that all our members attend, to interact with others and air your views and/or concerns. We are having another coffee morning soon as usual with talks from specialists in different fields. I'd requested earlier and reiterate that should any guide have something to share with others to let us know and we will allocate them time in the forums.

Lastly, I'd like to encourage our members to share information and interesting observation from the field through our newsletter by forwarding such to Tanwira. Many people are now on social media network i.e. facebook and should post on our facebook page such information so as to share with other members.

HAPPY EASTER!

Paul Kirui - Chairman
Gold-Level Member



B U S H N E W S

The day is 15th January 2012 my guests and I leave the camp (Rekero Camp Maasai Mara) at 6.30 am for the morning Game Drive. After driving for only 5 minutes North of my Camp we stop to scan around the plains. Unbelievable! A Male Hippo lying down Dead. Using my Binoculars I saw 5 male Lions and I definitely knew that was Notch's Coalition. NOTCH is a famous Male lion who hangs around with his 4 sons and they are currently controlling 7 prides in Maasai Mara. We drove closer and watched them as they devoured the 3 tons monster. An hour later, the 1st car arrives and we drive off and let them enjoy the rare sighting.



Regards,

Onesmus Irungu
Silver-Level Member

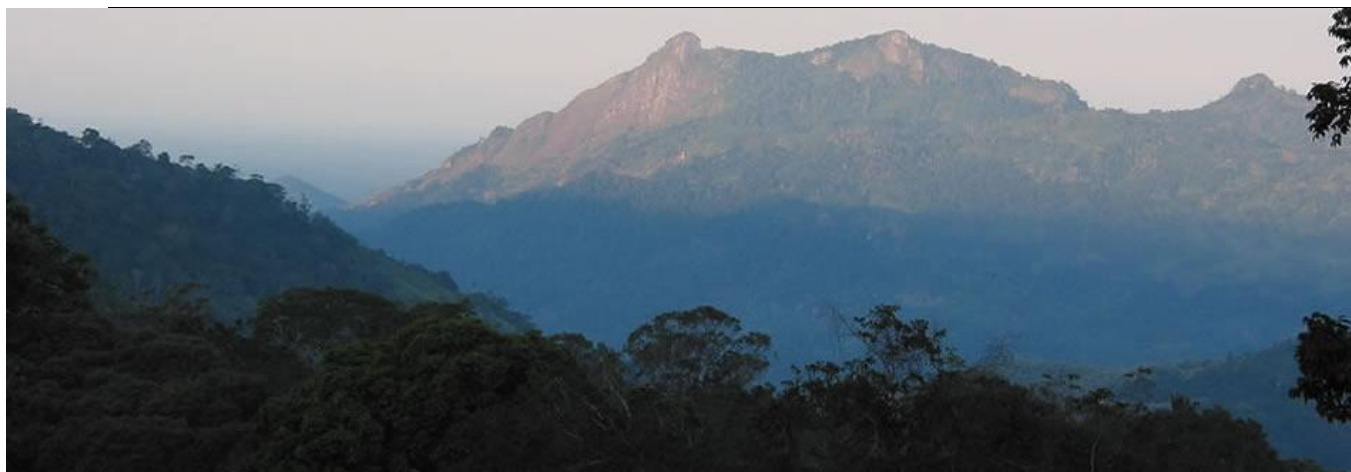


EASTERN ARC MOUNTAINS

AMANI NATURE RESERVE - 'A biodiversity hot spot'

Last November 2011, during my many travels and guiding in Tanzania I decided to visit Amani Nature Reserve in the East of Usambara Mountains. I got off the traditional northern tourist circuit of Arusha, Tarangire, Manyara, Ngorongoro and Serengeti. Let me first introduce the Eastern Arc Mountains because Amani Nature Reserve is part and parcel of this range of mountains. The Eastern Arc Mountains have been isolated for a long time from the other moist forests and have been fragmented for at least a century. They are mostly made of metamorphic rocks covered by a hard quartzite cap. This ancient crystalline mountains is a stretch of 13 mountain blocks from southern Kenya (Taita Hills) to southern Tanzania (Udzugwa mountain block) in between we have North Pare, South Pare, West Usambara, East Usambara, Nguu, Nguru, Ukaguru, Rubeho, uluguru, Malundwa, Mahenge and ends at Makambako gap at Udzugwa. Alignments of these mountain blocks forms a crescent within the Eastern part of Kenya and Tanzania hence the term 'Eastern Arc'.

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The management of the Eastern Arc is a national priority because of its important role in water catchments and being globally important due to their high biodiversity value. The Eastern Arc cloud forests have a global significance due to high endemism hence considered a 'hot spot'. (More than 100 vertebrates and 80 plant taxa are endemic to the Eastern Arc ecosystem) The concept of biodiversity hot spots was introduced in 1988 by a British ecologist Norman Myers as a way of prioritizing areas that are most important globally for biodiversity conservation. A hot spot is an area that supports an especially great diversity of species, particularly species that are endemic to the area that is, found nowhere else in the World. In Taita Hills for example, three endemic birds taxa occur, the Taita thrush-*turdus (olivaceus) helleri*, Taita-White eye-*zosterops (poliogaster) silvanus* and Taita Apalis-*apalis (thoracica) fuscigularis*. Likewise on the Uluguru Mountains in Tanzania Mrs. Moreau's Warbler (*scepomycter winifredae*) not merely specifically but generically distinct.



Among the plants, a good example is the African Violets of the genus (*Saintpaulia*) of which there are twenty species and all come from the hills between Taita's and the Nguru's. The Reptile fauna which varies from mountain range to mountain range are endemics found

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nowhere else in the World. The endemic reptiles of the Arc Mountains include such snakes as the Usambara Bush Viper (*atheri ceratophorus*), the Udzugwa Viper (*adernorhinos barbour*) a plethora of chamelions,geckos and other lizards. Sanje Mangabey (*cercocebus sanjei*) is an endemic Primate to Udzugwa Mountains.



Back to Amani Nature Reserve, the Guide welcomed us at Amani Information Centre at Zigi. The Centre act as an Eco-tourism and Information site. This is where you find information on every area of the reserve and is upon you to decide your area of interes to visit. Our guide informed us that the name Amani means peace in Kiswahili, we have nothing to worry!

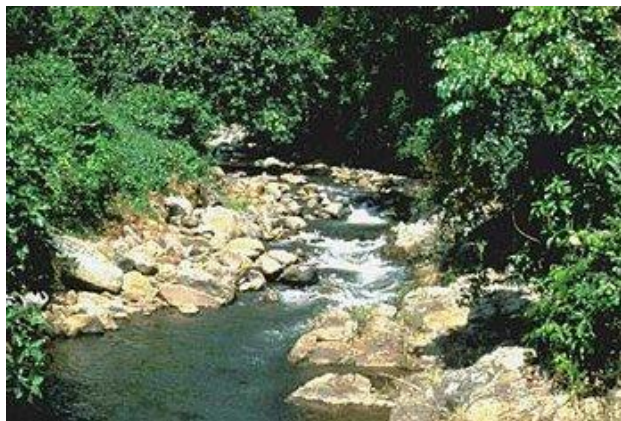
Amani Nature Reserve was officially established in 1997, but our charming guide informed us that part of the reserve was established by Germans in 1902. He says due to the mountain ranges and the weather that resembles that of the Swiss Alps without snow, the East Usambara mountains have been nicknamed small switzerland in Africa. Amani Nature Reserve covers an area of 8,380 hectares. About 3,400 plant species have been recorded in this area including about 650 species of trees. Arround 350 species of birds live in the Usambara Forest many of which are rare and endangered species. Of the 23 species of African Violets, 19 are found in Tanzania, (the other four are in Kenya). In this Centre if you have time you can actually see four of the 19 Tanzania species.

Amani Nature Reserve and sorrounding fragments hold a large part of the remaining forest of the East Usambara Mountains. At least 25-30 percent of the flora is endemic to the Eastern Arc forests, many of which may occur only in East Usambaras. Conspicuous trees include *Cynometra bachyrrhachis* and *Cola usambarensis*. Trees of more than 80m high and huge trees with multilateral roots can also be seen. Others mall flora are well known house plants the World over, African Violets- *Saintpaulia difilis* and *Saintpaulia deremensis* are also among the endemic species in the reserve. Apart from its horticultural popularity, the plant has been associated with spritual traditions of the 'Sambaa' and probably some other Tanzania tribes. Many of the Saintpaulia localities are known to be spiritual sites and it has been reported that the plant is used in traditional healing by some clans of the Sambaa.

The reserve is blessed with close to 30 species of spectacular reptiles. At least 16 of these reptiles ocuring in the Eastern Arc Mountains are endemic and found nowhere else in the World. Due the presence of many swamps and wetlands there are many different types of frogs. Butterflies and Moths are other insects found at the Amani Nature reserve. This

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situation as created opportunities to locals where different groups have been formed to sell Butterflies. Some of the species of Butterflies found in the reserve include *Acreae aganice*, *Amauris ochlea* and *Hypolima antevorta* which are an endemic species.



Amani Nature Reserve is also the source of river Zigi which provide water to Tanga Municipality and Mucheza town. The reserve also provides water to the Hale and pangani hydropower station in Pangani river.

Included in the reserve is the Amani Botanical Garden near Chemka, that is a major source of Spices and fruits in Tanzania. The garden covers 360 hectares with more than 1000 species of plants introduced from all over the World, hence known as a 'Gene bank'. The garden is supervised by the Amani Agricultural Research Station. This Garden has attracted Biologists, Botanists, Conservationist, Zoologists, Academicians, Researchers, Foresters, Experts and Practitioners from all over the world.

The reserve is surrounded by 18 villages of which the reserve tries through their educational programmes teach and organise them as well as look into their well being.

Meetings are often held for the community to form various cooperative activities, like Bee keeping, Butterflies collection, better methods of farming and how to avoid fires in the forest and their farms.

Our guide informs us that, despite of all these positive attributes, the reserve has its own challenges and threats. Increased human pressure, uncontrolled bush fire and illegal logging. Due to all these factors, the endemic species of flora and fauna are threatened with extinction because of clearance and degradation of the remaining small and fragmented forest and woodland areas. Not only, but also the ability of the catchment forest to retain and conserve high volumes of rain water is seriously reduced. In a nutshell, the major causes of species loss spelled '**HIPPO**', is an acronym scientists have coined to denote, the five primary causes of species decline and extinction; **H**abitat alteration, **I**nvasive species, **P**ollution, **P**opulation growth and **O**verexploitation. The most prevalent and powerful of these five causes is habitat alteration.

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I highly recommend that everyone visit Amani Nature Reserve. It is unique and very educational. Visitors can freely walk around the reserve even at night because there are no predators. The reserve has great potential as a tourist attraction. The government of Tanzania and other stake holders should put more effort in supporting, marketing and publicizing the reserve to earn revenue and for its future sustainability.

Philip K. Rono
Gold-Level Member



B U S H M A T T E R S

THE GEKO – a case of (almost) biting off more than you chew

Photos taken in Langata, February 2012



B U S H M A T T E R S



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Bronze-Level Member

Dear guides

Almost every day we hear of a poached rhino, elephant, lion or any other. What we as guides can do is obtain the emergency number of each park/reserve from the gate and have it with us to inform the rangers immediately when anything suspicious is seen. You might detect a snare or see people who do not really belong into that area. We can make a change! Just the last few days ago we lost a lioness to morani near Oloololo Escarpment, a rhino in Tsavo, and an elephant by a poisoned arrow in Tsavo East.



Kind regards

Elvira Wolfer
Silver-Level Member

F U N F A C T S



DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The leg bones of a bat are so thin that they can't walk

Some male song birds sing more than 2000 times each day ...

The only mammals that undergo menopause are elephants, humpback whales & human females ...

A tarantula spider can survive for more than two years without food ...

There are one million ants for every human in the world ...

If you lift a Kangaroo's tail off the ground it can't hop because they use their tails for balance ...

Alligators can live up to 100 years ...

Hippo milk is pink ...

Gorillas can catch human colds & other illnesses ...

If you keep a Goldfish in a dark room it will grow pale ...

Male Ostriches can roar like lions ...

A lion in the wild usually makes no more than 20 kills a year ...

Compiled by:
Tanwira Fakhri
Bronze-Level member



B O O K S F O R S A L E



1. **"Trees of Kenya" – An illustrated field guide**

3rd edition 2011 by Anne Birnie & Tim Noad

A comprehensive field guide of the common trees of Kenya covering some 300

indigenous & introduced species. A copy goes for K.Shs 1,700/ from the **KPSGA** Office.



2. “Wayside Flowers of East Africa”

A new reprint by Teresa Sapiha

This little book is a pleasant introduction to a variety of wild flowers found on the wayside. It aims to give information and create interest and enjoyment of one of our most precious of natural treasures. A copy goes for K.Shs 450/ from the **KPSGA** Office.

Both these books can also be found in book shops in Nairobi.

E X A M D A T E S F O R 2 0 1 2

The monthly exam dates are as follows:

BRONZE-LEVEL:

25 th April	30 th May	27 th June	25 th July
29 th August	26 th September	31 st October	28 th November

SILVER-LEVEL:

23 rd February	19 th April	24 th May	20 th September
22 nd November			



HAPPY EASTER!

