



KPSGA

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Greeting from the association!

I believe you are all well and that you have had a busy season. I would like to wish all the members who are still on safari the best, as well as those soon starting another busy season.

It has also been a busy season for us at the association. We have kept administering exams on the scheduled dates. In August Neil Cohen, one of our exam committee members went to Lewa to do an assesment on a training organized and ran by Ecotraining Sout Africa. At the end he gave bronze level exams to the course particpants and some guides from lewa.

We are trying to work with KATO coast to organize for bronze level exams at teh coast. We will notify you when the arrangment goes through.

We would also like to inform our members that our bronze exams are now full mulitple choice questions again. The reason for this move was reached after a series of meeting we had with

KATO, and the ministry of tourism. The ministry was concerned that if they are to make bronze level mandatory for all guides, the pass rate was too low at 36% highest when we had no choices on our questions, but we mantain our silver exams in the current standard. The ministry's worry was that if we have to have all guides KPSGA certified, then we will not achieve this soon if the pass rate was this low, considering that we have over 5,000 guides in the country.

This past season has gone well and we have not had any serious issues raised to us regarding bad behaviour etc. And that is encouraging. However, there is still a concern about some bad behaviour at sightings in the Mara. The most notable of these are crowding at sightings, rushing to crossing points at high speed, cutting off or blocking crossing animals. I would like to urge our members as i have done before, to uphold the best guiding practices and lead by example. It is pointed out that the use of VHF radios has now diluted the guides creativity and initiative in finding own game.

Instead one now just relies on the radio for easy stuff. This latest development is now robbing the sightings of the reward and joy I read with a lot of regrets an article by someone in Nairobi Star, that read "My dream career, ruined by amateurs". He was referring how he longed to be a guide when he saw a guide with tourists, he was motivated to be like him some day, and he did. However, he regrets that all the values and characters he saw in his mentors, were now diluted by amateurs who have joined the industry and now behaving badly,

that comes with hours or even days of finding something, and eventually finding it!

bringing to shame the once noble profession. I do hope that as professional guides and members of the association, we will adhere to the code of conduct which we all signed, and marshal our efforts in curbing wayward characters in our industry by leading with the best example;

Paul Kirui
KPSGA Chairman

B U S H M A T T E R S



Dear Guides,

Beginning of August we drove to the Olkiombo area and started watching lions. 5 males and 2 females. One of them was a mating

couple, which attracted a lot of attention. Then there was the injured lion in the picture. Here is my first question. Is it really necessary to drive very close to

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an animal that is already under stress from the pain? Even though they are used to cars and talking tourists, the approaching car still take his energy he needs to heal!

The visible injury was not the only one, even one front leg was badly swollen and he could hardly step down. This we saw on another day when he was feeding on a wildebeest most likely killed by the other lions. We later got to know that he was involved in a serious fight some days back.

While watching the mating couple another male lion suddenly came walking up to them. The tension rose! It went all so fast – but now there were 3 grown up male lions! (I didn't even see the third one approaching) they were in a fight all standing on their hind legs. Dust and roaring filled the air. Our

cameras were focusing on this great event – BUT a small blue car with a white self drive family and 2 children below 10 years on the roof drove parallel to our car so none of us, not even the clients from up could shoot one picture. When I told them they are blocking our view she just answered, “talk politely”. We couldn't move fast enough to capture this scene and the lions walked down to a small river marking intensively. What can we as guides do against such reckless behaviour? Where are the rangers? It could have been another scenario with the headlines reading “a child falling inbetween lions....!”

**Submitted by Birgitt Lokan
Via Elvira Wolfer – Silver-Level
Member**



When we had picnic under a desert date and had just unpacked some of our lunch items when a minibus came with Japanese tourists. My clients didn't like being disturbed so we shifted to the next tree. Just after having arrived and unpacked 3 more mini busses with Japanese came.

Now my tough clients exploded and told the drivers to move under another free tree which was available nearby. We spread our blankets in a way to occupy all of the shady place. Of course the drivers became rude and tried to teach us this is Masai Mara, whatever that means!

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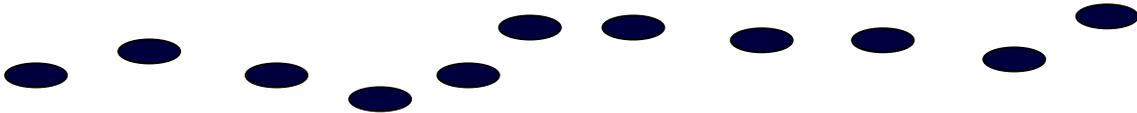
The mini busses remained on the road, one with the radio call on - lovely sound!

But the Japanese had to take their lunch under the tree on the other side of the road. If there had been only one tree we could understand, but there were many! One of the drivers was dressed like he was fresh from a disco show with a big cowboy hat!

I believe we have a very strong Association with a lot of members, we can push changes through!

And changes really must come with the increasing number of tourists and vehicles out there, otherwise we will lose our "employer" mother nature!

Elvira Wolfer – Silver-Level Member



Wildebeeste dies of turning disease

We were out on the banks of the Mara river waiting to see if some wildebeestes would give us a show by crossing, when suddenly we saw one on the edge of the river that was moving in tight circles . I had already told the guests about the bot fly that affects the wildebeests by crawling up their nostrils to lay its eggs there and pupate. This would disorientate the host animal and make it sneeze hard to expel the fly out, if it managed to do this, then it would survive, if not, it would die. This is what had happened to this particular wildebeest. The whole event of turning round and round lasted for nearly half an hour. It was so disturbed that we decided not to watch it suffering any longer and went on to have our lunch by an acacia tree.

Whilst we were having lunch, we saw some vultures up in the sky circling



towards that direction and the guests asked if these vultures had seen the poor wildebeest and were waiting for it to die. The truth is, the gnu succumbed to the disease and the vultures descended on it very fast. This was a *very* fresh meal for them, as in these days of the migration, there are lots of rotting carcasses which they will still feed on to clean up the environment. Dustbins of the wild!

Gordon Omondi - Silver-Level Member

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JUST WAITING FOR DEATH

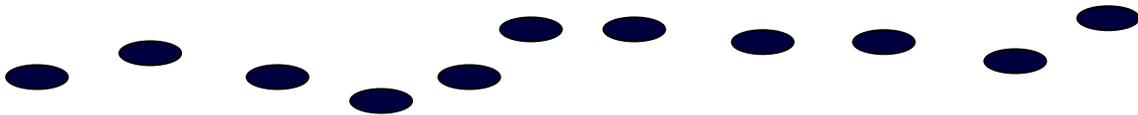


Sometimes the world of nature can be very cruel, imagine sitting next to death for hours knowing that at any moment you will end up in the jaws of a waiting crocodile and you have no hope at all of surviving. This is what happened to a wildebeest on a river crossing. The poor animal had broken his hind legs right in the middle of the river next to a huge crocodile. He was at the tail-end of a long line of wildebeests that had already crossed to the other side. In the course of

trying to catch up with the rest, he jumped too heavily onto a rocky stretch and became immobilized.

We watched him struggling severely to wake up and go, but each time his hind legs could not allow it. He tried supporting himself with the front legs so as to propel himself forwards but each time ended up sitting back on the same spot. Meanwhile the crocodile which was only about four meters away simply kept an eye. He was in no hurry as he knew that his prey was there for him to devour at any time he wished. In addition to the crocodile the other danger that this wildebeest faced was flash floods if it rained upstream. The guests felt sorry for the crocodile, but that is how nature works!

Gordon Omondi - Silver-Level Member



On 26th of September 2011 around 14.10 hours we drove from Lanet Gate to the Main Gate in Nakuru National Park. On the road side we noticed playing Green monkeys. When we drove back to Lanet about 30 minutes later we found this little monkey dead on the road. We reported to the park rangers at Lanet. This is an other example how speeding and careless driving kills.

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When animals are noted every driver and guide must slow down. Monkeys are well visible and where there is one, there are others. We are not in the wild to kill but to conserve. If itineraries and time are

well planned speeding is very rarely required.

Elvira Wolfer – Silver-Level Member



Dear members,

While on a game drive in the Mara recently, I witnessed an unusual behaviour by a pack of banded mongooses.

First, it was two male impala rams in real fight. They were so engaged in the fight that they totally ignored (or were not aware of) our presence though we were very close. While still watching and wondering what may have made the two to fight that seriously, a pack of banded mongooses appeared behind us and ran towards the fighting impala. They then ran around the fighting males, chirping loudly and to our amazement, a couple of them went up to the fighting males and

kept trying to bite them by their ankles! This was brave enough! While this happened, the rest of the pack were chirping and some standing on hind legs.

What I and my guests could not understand was whether the mongooses were trying to make the warring impalas to stop fighting or could there have been something they wanted to protect where the impalas were.

Over to you members to help me solve this puzzle; (I have attached a picture)

Paul Kirui
Chairman – Gold-Level Member

K P S G A N E W S

LIMITED TIME FOR AMNESTY

HURRY & PAY BEFORE THE END OF DECEMBER 2011

As you know we have been having an amnesty for some months now, allowing people with lapsed membership subscriptions to back pay for only 4 years and the rest of their outstanding years were waived. This is about to come to an end at the end of December 2011.

Please make use of it now before it is too late, as next year you will have to pay all your outstanding subscriptions to retain your membership or start your Bronze-Level membership again and wait the 3 years before sitting for your Silver-Level exam.

KPSGA Management

F O R S A L E

1986 Land Cruiser K.Shs 580,000/-. It's a 4 liter, 6 cylinder diesel engine. The suspension was replaced a while back and it has not seen much wear and tear since that was done.



If you are interested please call 0722-299524

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

The remaining exam dates for the year are as follows:

BRONZE-LEVEL: - 30th November
SILVER-LEVEL: - 24th November