



KPSGA

NEWSLETTER

December2014

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

This year we admitted 192 new members to the association. We take this opportunity to welcome the new members to the association and urge the rest of you to guide them to be responsible members of the association. Let us also congratulate the 53 Bronze Level members who have moved on to Silver Level. Finally, let us applaud Daniel Lomoe and Joseph Chege for advancing to Gold Level membership.

Paul Kirui has diligently served the association as Chairman of the Board of Directors. He has stepped down as chairman, but still remains a member of the Board. We can't thank him enough for his immense contribution to the advancement of the association through his wise leadership. Preston Mutinda now takes over the chairmanship of the Board and I would like you to join me in congratulating him on his appointment to this position and give him the support he needs to steer the association to greater heights of success.

Philip Rono and Edwin Selempo who attended the Smithsonian Festival in the United States of America represented our country very well and have donated two new guide books to our library. We thank them for this.

We are grateful to our partners especially our corporate sponsors Cottar's 1920's Camp, Saruni Camps, Kicheche Camps, Africa House, Cheli & Peacock and Asilia Africa, Origins Safaris, Royal African Safaris, Southern Cross Safaris, Game Watchers Safaris, Onsafari Kenya, Vintage Africa Safaris, The Safari Collection, The Tamarind Group and Safari Link Aviation for their commitment to our cause.

Finally, we thank you all for your commitment to KPSGA and for upholding ethical conduct of your businesses throughout the year. We look forward to a prosperous 2015.

Tom Lesarge
Chief Executive Officer

BUSH MATTERS

Mother cheetah hunts with two sub-adult cubs

On one of our early morning game drives in Northern Serengeti in October, we were treated to a thrilling event of a mother cheetah and her two older cubs that successfully hunted a young impala. In the beginning we saw them walking and looking around with the mother on the lead. We knew they were on a hunting mission and so we kept watch and followed from a distance.



There are many rock outcrops in north-western Serengeti which they wittingly utilised as vantage points (as seen in the picture) to scan the field for any sight of prey. We noticed that they intently focused on one direction in their stare. Suddenly, they climbed down and slowly started running with the mother leading. For a while we lost sight of them as the slow run exploded into a very fast sprint. A few minutes later we caught up with them and discovered that they had captured, but not killed a young impala.



The mother then let the cubs play with it for sometime before finally devouring it. They would let it try to escape before giving chase to pull it down and hold it between their legs. This is characteristic of cheetah cubs sharpening their hunting skills with captured prey before becoming independent. Some of my guests did not want to look at what was happening as they felt very sorry for the young Impala which was already in shock and terrified. But I encouraged them to be strong as that is the way of nature – many a times very raw.

Gordon Omondi
Gold Level Member

Samburu Lion Watch Guides

Ewaso Lions recently trained 7 safari guides from various lodges in Samburu to join our Lion Watch program. This makes a total of 20 Lion Watch guides in Samburu, who collect important lion data while they are on their daily gamedrives.

The 2-day training session covered ecology, conservation, identifying and aging lions, Samburu's lions, and how to collect data on smart phones.



The most enjoyable part of the training was a “naming ceremony” where the guides voted for their favorite names as we named Nanai’s and Nabulu’s 5 cubs. There were more than 25 names to choose from – all suggested according to features and personalities of the lions and names the guides liked. The votes were tallied up and the names given to the 5 cubs -Lenkwe, Loeku, Lmeisudori (always seen), Naishorua (given) and Namunyak (lucky one). Everyone was really excited by this and following the training, we often hear guides chatting about the cubs and sending text messages talking about the cubs personalities. Also, since the training, the guides have already had close to 20 lion sightings and have recorded it all on their smart phones.

We thank Samburu Intrepids for hosting the training, and all participating lodges and guides for helping us expand the Lion Watch program. Congratulations to the new Lion Watch guides!

Shivani Bhalla
Bronze Level Member

One-horned Impala and white-faced Topi

A couple of months ago a male impala was spotted at Olare Motorogi with only one horn, and there is no sign that the other horn broke off for whatever reason. I had a keen look at the impala with my pair of binoculars, but saw no trace of horn stump. Could it be an abnormality in its development?



While the great wildebeest migration was on, I observed this white faced topi down at Paradise plain near the main Mara river crossing area. I thought it rubbed its face on some white substance, but on closer examination, I noticed that it was its natural colour. Could it be an abnormality?



**Dickson Olkisonkoi Sadera
Silver Level Member**

Snakes

Most Kenyans fear and misunderstand snakes. When they encounter one, their first instinct is to either kill it or run away. In October the Bioken Snake farm organized an international seminar on snakes at Hemmingways Hotel Watamu. They do this every two years. I was lucky to be one of the four guides sponsored by Camp Rekero Asilia to attend the seminar. It was very informative. The best first aid one can give to a snake bite victim is to transfer him/her to the nearest hospital as soon as possible, while comforting and reassuring him/her.

Not all snakes are venomous, but all snakes play a very vital role in our lives. Everyday approximately 35 million rats are born and without snakes this would be a tragic disaster to farmers and our homes. Snakes therefore need to be conserved to keep playing their role of keeping pest populations in check. Guides we can do more to educate our society about this wonderful but feared creature.

Onesmus Ndungo
Silver Level Member

The Boomslang (beautiful but dangerous)

The bushland does not only consist of bigger and faster animals but also the crawlers which are quite challenging to spot especially when they are on the trees. When one sets out for a game drive, the least animal that comes to mind are the crawlers. Northern Serengeti is a perfect habitat for the boomslang snakes which are mainly arboreal (living on the trees). These snakes are distinguished by their very large eyes with round pupils and are dangerous but shy to attack. When cornered, this snake inflates its neck and may then strike, its venom is small but prevents blood clot. On many occasions that we have encountered them on game drives, they would allow us to have a closer view(2-3 meter range) as long as silence is maintained. They are day time hunters with excellent vision that helps them to actively pursue prey on trees, mainly birds and lizards. Adult females and juveniles are brown-olive with white to brown bellies. Males are brightly colored but undergo different color phases: they may be leaf-green or bright green or yellow with black-edged scales. They may grow up to about three meters long.



Although many people do not like snakes, they would sometimes appreciate the beauty of the boomslang whose preferred habitat in northern Serengeti are the *Terminalia mollis* trees although we encountered this one on a croton bush.

Gordon Omondi
Gold Level Member

A young rhino with deformed ears.

In northern Serengeti closer to the Sand River, we are usually treated to a sighting of a black rhino mother with her calf that is about eight months old. What is unusual about this calf is that it was born without ears. Instead of the ears there are bumps which make it appear quite odd. In the early parts of this year some guides argued that the ears would grow out of the bump, they kept watch only to realize that this was a deformity and that nothing would come out of it. The mother has been nicknamed "Julie" short for Julius a guide in one of the camps who was good at finding rhinos on game drives along the sand river near the border with the Masai Mara. In the course of his pursuit for the black rhinos, many times he ventured off the roads and tracks thereby making himself an "enemy" of TANAPA (Tanzania national park) rangers.



"Julie" is not a Serengeti rhino she normally crosses over from the Mara to browse on the shrubs adjacent to the sand river, but on some occasions she would venture much further inside the Serengeti. During the wet cloudy days, it is easier to see "Julie" with her calf traversing the open plains from one browsing area to the other. At times she would disappear from our sight for lengthy periods only to resurface again and again. In such instances she would be back home in the Mara and the guides in the Serengeti would be heard saying after desperately looking for her in vain "amerudi Kwao kwa Uhuru", (she's gone back to her homeland, president Uhuru's territory). The good thing with "Julie" is that she is never shy and would sometimes walk right in front of the vehicles with her calf following behind without any worries at all (see pictures). She also has an older calf of almost four years of age which she no longer tolerates as he was chased away soon after Julie gave birth to the current one. The older calf is very shy and would run away from any slight approach.

The reason for this deformity is not known, probably it could be some disease or even parasitic. Guides in northern Serengeti have debated on this without any answer. How this abnormality will affect its lifestyle remains to be seen. His older brother has well formed ears.



"Julie" and her calf are never shy and would walk closer to vehicles.

Gordon Omondi
Gold Level Member

THE LAW

The newly established Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) is mandated to regulate products and services in the tourism and hospitality industry in Kenya. Please take note of the following requirements by the law and abide.

Requirement for license by the Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) according to the Tourism Act No. 28 of 2011.

(1) A person shall not undertake any of the tourism activities and services specified in the Ninth Schedule, unless that person has a license issued by the Authority. (Sections relevant to guiding in the 9th Schedule are as follows):

Class "D" Enterprises—

- (i) Game fishing outfitters;
- (ii) Enterprises offering camps and camping equipment for hire;
- (iii) Nature parks;
- (iv) Nature reserves;
- (v) Nature trails;
- (vi) Game ranches;
- (vii) Amusement parks; and
- (viii) **Non-citizen tour leaders or guides;**

(e) Class "E" Enterprises—

- (i) Local traditional boat operators;
- (ii) Professional safari photographers;
- (iii) Curio vendors;
- (iv) Private zoos;
- (v) **Citizen tour leaders or guides;** and
- (vi) General vendors; and
- (vii) Beach operators

(2) A person seeking a license or any variation of a license held by him shall apply to the Board of the Authority in such manner and form as may be prescribed by the Authority. (Currently the following are the prescribed requirements:

- a. Fully filled license application form I
- b. Application fee of Ksh 1,000 for new applicants
- c. License fee Kshs. 2,000 payable to
 - 1. A/C NO. 1121940498
 - a. KCB MOI AVENUE BRANCH
 - b. A/C NAME; MINISTRY OF TOURISM REVENUE/AIA

- d. Letter of recommendation from the employer (or a recognized trade/professional association)
- e. Copy of certificate of good conduct for the current year
- f. Copy of driver PSV (for driver guide)
- g. Copy of driving license
- h. Certificates of professionalism in tour guiding
- i. Copy of national ID card

(3) An application for a license or for the variation of license under subsection (1) shall be accompanied by such fees as may be prescribed by the Authority.

(4) The Authority may, on receipt of an application under this section, investigate or require the submission of such further information as it may be necessary in order to enable it consider the application.

A license issued under this Act shall expire on the 31st December of the year in respect of which it is issued.

(8) An application for the renewal of an existing license shall be made at least two months before the expiry date of the existing license.



EXAM DATES FOR 2015

BRONZE

28 th January	25 th February	25 th March	29 th April
27 th May	24 th June	29 th July	26 th August
30 th September	28 th October	25 th November	

SILVER

19 th February	19 th March	23 rd April	21 st May
25 th June	24 th September	22 nd October	19 th November

GOLD

May (Dates will be announced in March).

Dates and venues for any exams to be done outside the stated dates will be announced in advance.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

We wish all our christian members a merry christmas and all of you a very prosperous New Year.

