

KENYA PROFESSIONAL SAFARI GUIDES ASSOCIATION (KPSGA)



WHAT IS THE KPSGA?

The Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association is a private company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. **KPSGA** is an independent non-profit making body created for the certification of Safari Driver Guides, Lodge Naturalists and other individuals within the Tourism Sector. The **KPSGA** aims to provide an effective, inexpensive and voluntary certification process giving awards to Bronze, Silver and Gold standards through an examination process.

A certified safari driver guide will have an independent proof of his knowledge and experience.

WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES?

A Kenya Professional Safari Guide in order to sit for an exam:

- 1) For the Bronze category, need to have trained in any tourism related course or have experience in the field or should be working in the tourism industry
- 2) For the Silver category, must have three (3) additional years in the field, at Bronze-Level.
- 3) For the Gold category, must have an additional three (3) years in the field, at Silver Level.

WHO CAN TAKE THE TEST?

Professional Safari Guides, Lodge Naturalists, Safari Driver-guides and others in the Tourism Safari Industry. Progression up the various categories will be based on merit alone.

HOW MUCH TRAINING IS NEEDED?

Several years' field experience in the wildlife safari industry should be adequate in order to take the first category (bronze) exam. Of course time spent on the recommended reading list will assist considerably.

WHAT DOES THE TEST COVER?

The first step at the Bronze-Level includes 100 simple multiple choice questions on different knowledge domains, ranging from local geography and history, current affairs, through first aid, to conservation, knowledge of wildlife, birds, trees and flowers. Anyone who has been diligent and alert during their several years in the field should find the bronze level relatively easy.

WHERE CAN I TAKE THE EXAM?

The test will be offered periodically at centres designated by **KPSGA**.

IS THERE A FEE FOR TAKING THE EXAM?

Yes, there will be a charge to cover administration costs. To join as a provisional member and to sit the Bronze – Level exam now costs **K.Shs 4,000/-**. To sit the Silver-level exam now costs **K.Shs 5,000/-**. Repeating these two exams during the current/same year is K.Shs 1,500/-. We issue membership cards valid for one year and request all candidates to come with two passport size coloured photos of themselves taken against a light background.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Provisional member: K.Shs 4,000/- Includes 1 exam attempt & 1 year's subscription
Bronze member : K.Shs 2,500/- per year.
Silver member : K.Shs 3,500/- per year.
Gold member : K.Shs 4,000/- per year. (After the initial exam fee)

HOW CAN THE KPSGA HELP ME?

KPSGA members will be allowed to display their qualification in the form of individual serial numbered plastic badges bearing the **KPSGA** logo, their personal name, **KPSGA** number and other relevant information. This will proclaim that the holder has attained a certain standard, and abides by our strict Code of Conduct. The card is renewable annually.

HOW CAN ONE KNOW WHO IS A MEMBER?

There is a permanent register (data base) of paid up members and their categories and their specialisation's maintained at the **KPSGA** secretariat.

WHAT ACTIVITIES DOES THE KPSGA CARRY OUT?

The main activities undertaken by **KPSGA** are: -

1. Managing the certification process, setting and marking regular exams for the Bronze, Silver and Gold standards, and awarding badges to successful candidates.
2. Ensuring that all members understand, sign and follow the **KPSGA** Code of Conduct, which sets out detailed guidelines for maximising the positive impacts of safari tourism in Kenya.
3. Enforcing the Code of Conduct and working with the appropriate bodies, including **KWS** to ensure that discipline is maintained. The **KPSGA** also has a Disciplinary Committee.
4. Working with the industry to build recognition of **KPSGA**'s standards as a means of raising tourist interest in Kenyan safaris and ensuring tourism product quality and good driver-guides. In general to act as a quality control body at the core of Kenya's tourism industry.
5. To support the development of the safari-guide field of work as a profession with prospects of career building, and so encourage talented young Kenyans to enter this profession. The provision of a personnel – base of competent and qualified people in the provision of experienced and specialised safari guides.
6. To develop specialisations within the profession and to encourage diversification within the industry.

KPSGA EXAMS FOR THE YEAR 2020

BRONZE-LEVEL:

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

SILVER-LEVEL:

20th February;	19th March;	23rd April;	21st May;
18th June;	24th September;	22nd October;	19th November

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Background

The **KPSGA** has been established in Kenya as an independent non-profit making body for the certification of safari driver/guides, Professional Safari Guides, Lodge Naturalists and other individuals within the Tourism Sector. With competing tourism destinations, and despite the economic importance of its safari tourism industry, Kenya had no mechanism for recognising and rewarding the skills and experience of those associated with tourism and guides who come in direct contact with clients.

There are estimated to be over 6,500 driver-guides working in Kenya's safari tourism industry. Less than half of these work with companies registered with KATO. There was no way that a recognized employer or tourist visitor could differentiate between a trained, experienced and highly skilled individual to one hired straight from a matatu stand with no guiding skills or experience. Kenya incurs huge costs as a result; a poor image compared with other competing destinations, disgruntled tourists, de-motivated individuals, and general inefficiencies in the safari tourism industry.

Goal

The **KPSGA** provides a simple, inexpensive and voluntary certification process for driver-guides, giving awards to Bronze, Silver and Gold standards through an examination process. **KPSGA** aims to be self-financing through charging an annual membership fee to its members, maintaining a small permanent staff, and keeping annual costs to a minimum.

With an overhaul of attitudes and a re-commitment to the principles of conservation and protection of the environment, which will be brought about by adherence to the code of ethics, the key players in the field will now act as a catalyst in ensuring that these principles are not only adhered to but, actually practiced.

KPSGA has a code of ethics and standards, which is legally enforceable – therefore **KPSGA** is the first Association in the tourism industry to be able to do this. Due to the progression of standards the **KPSGA** seeks to encourage its members to improve their level of knowledge and related guiding skills throughout their career. Through the formalisation of qualifications, the **KPSGA** will improve the manpower base within the industry, and allow the industry to diversify.

Approval by KWS and other bodies

The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Board has approved the **KPSGA** as the organisation to be responsible for certification of Kenyan driver-guides. KWS works closely with **KPSGA** on monitoring the certification process and on enforcing sanctions where necessary. KWS also gives support in the form of office space at KWS headquarters.

KPSGA will continue to operate in cooperation with Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, KWS, KATO, the National Museums of Kenya and the various County Councils. The exams are held at the KWS headquarters Nairobi Safari Walk with representatives of KWS and the Exam Committee in attendance. KWS and KATO as driving forces in the industry have also given significant financial support and the MTW, KATO and KWS are represented on the main Board.

KPSGA Contacts:

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RECOMMENDED READING FOR KPSGA GUIDES

BRONZE LEVEL:

- A Safari Guide To Kenya – Compiled by Tana Helfer Herbert (available as a PDF from the KPSGA office)
- The East African Safari Quiz Book - Bogdan Rozwadowski & Stefan Rozwadowski (Text Book Centre or Bookstop Yaya Centre)
- Stuart's Field Guide to the National Parks & Game Reserves of East Africa – Chris & Tilde Stuart
- Secondary School Atlas
- Form 1-4 Geography Text Books
- Form 1-4 History Text Books

SILVER LEVEL:

- KPSGA Silver Syllabus (Available at KPSGA head office)
- St John's Ambulance First Aid Handbook
- Pathfinder: Illustrated For Naturalists – Janesta Pulela (Between The Lines Bookshop at Village Market or Karen Hardy)
- Kenya: A Natural History – Stephen Spawls and Glenn Matthews (Text Book Centre Or Bookstop Yaya)
- The Wilderness Guardian – Tim Corfield (Text Book Centre Or Bookstop Yaya)

GOLD LEVEL:

- All natural history books recommended. See official KPSGA Gold Level Prerequisites and preparation guide (available from KPSGA Head office via email)

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

**Every self-respecting guide should attempt to buy at least 1 bird book and 1 mammal book over the course of their career*

BIRDS

- Birds of East Africa (2nd Edition) – Terry Stevenson and John Fanshawe
- Birds of Kenya and Northern Tanzania – Dale Zimmerman, Ron Pearson, Don Turner
- Beat About the Bush: Birds – Trevor Carnaby
- Birds of Prey of Africa and its Islands – Megan and Alan Kemp

MAMMALS

- Kingdon Guide to African Mammals – Jonathan Kingdon
- Safari Companion –Richard D. Estes
- Creatures of Habit – Peter Apps
- Beat About the Bush: Mammals – Trevor Carnaby

PLANTS

- Common Trees and Shrubs of East Africa (3rd Edition) – Najma Dharani
- Kenya Trees, Shrubs, & Lianas – Henk Beentje (out of print, but best book if you can find it)
- Trees of Kenya – Tim Noad and Anne Birnie
- Wildflowers of Kenya & Northern Tanzania – Anne Powys
- Wayside Flowers – Theresa Sapieha
- Acacias of East Africa – Najma Dharani
- Medicinal Plants of East Africa – Najma Dharani and Abiy Yenesew

INVERTEBRATES

- Insects of East Africa Pocket Guide – Dino Martins (from KPSGA Offices)
- Butterflies of East Africa Pocket Guide – Dino Martins & Steve Collins (from KPSGA Offices)
- Spiders of Southern Africa – Astri and John Leroy
- Filmer's Spiders of Southern Africa – Norman Larsen & Martin Filmer
- Insects of Southern Africa – Mike Picker, Alan Weaving, Charles Griffith
- Butterflies of Southern Africa – Steve Woodhall

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

- Field Guide to East African Reptiles – Stephen Spawls et. Al
- The Amphibians of Kenya – Stephen Spawls, et. Al (from KPSGA Offices)
- Field Guide to the Frogs & Other Amphibians of Africa – Alan Channing & Mark-Oliver Rodel

TRACKS & SIGNS

- Field Guide to the Animal Tracks of Southern Africa – Louis Liebenberg (available free online)
- Photographic Guide to Tracks and Tracking in Southern Africa – Louis Liebenberg
- Field Guide to the Tracks & Signs of Southern, Central & East African Wildlife – Chris & Tilde Stuart
- Tracker Manual – Alex Van Den Heever, Karel Benadie, Renias Mholongo

GENERAL/OTHER

- Wildlife Conservation And Tourism in Kenya – Daniel M. Nyeki
- The Guide's Guide To Guiding – Garth Thompson (Available at Bookstop Yaya Centre)
- Laikipia Natural History Guide (Booklet available at Bookstop Yaya)
- Nairobi National Park guide (Booklet available from KWS Giftshop at KWS HQ)