An introduction to Kenya's Geology

with Abigail Church

East Africa is a geological wonder – extremely old rocks ¾ of the age of Earth itself occur in Western Kenya and host gold deposits; a once enormous mountain chain – the Mozambique Belt, comparable to the modern-day Himalayas, extends through Kenya from north to south and contains a wealth of precious gems; and most recently the Great Rift Valley cleaved the region in two and is the globe's best example of a modern continental rift.

Suyian lends itself perfectly to a short course on Geology – there is great exposure of several different rock types of vastly different ages, and extensive views across a landscape shaped by unimaginable forces over aeons of time. One cannot fail to notice Kenya's landforms, its volcanoes, lakes, escarpments, and plateaux. We will learn to recognise the local rocks and minerals within them. Participants will enjoy a deeper understanding of the rocks beneath them and the processes which shaped their homeland. I hope that this short course will inspire participants to learn more themselves and always keep their eyes open, wherever they go.

Classroom sessions: We start with an overview of the formation of the Universe and our Solar System – the position of Earth and how this has enabled life to evolve. We talk about the moon and its creation, the tides and seasons. We look at Earth's interior and how processes within our planet affect the crust and the mechanisms which drive changes at the surface. We look at how and why earthquakes and volcanoes occur, volcanic eruptions and their products. We move on to look at rock forming minerals and how to identify them. We look at the geology of Kenya. Finally we look at how life evolved on this planet, possible causes of mass extinction events, and the evolution of Man.

Fieldwork: Much of the fieldwork is on foot, and involves identification of rocks in situ, by recognising minerals, textures and other features. I will show participants how to use a hand lens, how to identify minerals using a couple of easy tricks. You will learn how to read a and interpret a geological map. I will take students to localities where the main rock types are found, a high point where the main topographic features can be identified and explained. I have found whilst teaching these courses many other topics are raised and discussed such as; fossil fuels, renewable energy, theories pertaining to the spread of Homo sapiens, gemstones and their value, geological hazards, our responsibilities towards our planet and many more.

Abigail Church researched the extrusive carbonatites of Oldoinyo Lengai for her Ph.D and has been teaching local geology to guides and interested folk in Kenya and Tanzania for the last 15years.

No equipment is necessary other than a notebook and an inquiring mind.

Training Schedule: 3 days with a maximum of 10 participants.
Note: We expect participants to arrive any time after 3pm on Thursday 22nd June and depart after lunch on Sunday 25th June.
Cost:
48,000/= pp full board x 8 pax sharing in the Lodge accommodation
38,000/= pp full board for those who would like to bring their own tent but have Lodge meals.
18,000/= pp full board for safari guides and students who will be bringing their own tent and a bedroll and simple food will be provided at the lodge canteen.

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