



KPSGA

NEWSLETTER

December 2022

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This year has been very positive to the industry when compared to the last two years that were about survival and so many uncertainties. There is a famous saying, “May you live in interesting times” These times have truly been just that. But the industry, the association, the board, our staff and most all, our members, have survived and grown stronger. It has been heartening to see our membership continue to grow with 217 new members. We also have 24 new silver members and 3 gold, congratulations to all, as we look forward to brighter days for our industry.

I take this opportunity to welcome Mr peter Ngori who just joined our Board as KATO representative Karibu sana!!!

We have continued to work with other partners and stakeholders in the industry to overcome present challenges and pave the way for a responsible, sustainable, and innovative tourism ecosystem of tomorrow. Together with our partners, we continue to offer sustainable tourism courses. You will be informed about the next training in due time.

This December KATO wound up the Green-tour Kenya program that has been running for the last four years in webinar’s, physical and online trainings in a ceremony that culminated in the handover of a Policy Paper which identifies various shortcomings and proposes Policy actions to address the future of sustainable tourism development in Kenya.

Zarek and his team have continued to build our website and now has a very good online library, a wonderful learning resource that is only available to up to date members.

Through KATO, we intend to introduce an affordable insurance cover that can be paid daily for evacuation etc while on safari. We will give more info on the same in due course.

Irresponsible tourism practices have continued to be on the rise, this as we all know disrespects and causes suffering to wildlife and the environment of any given destination. It is such a shame and sad to see social media light up pointing fingers at the Kenyan guide!

Remember, the solutions to the challenges we face lie in our hands. Let us all be ambassadors of this great association and work hard for the betterment of our industry. Each of us has a role to play. We will continue to work very closely with our parent Ministry and all the stakeholders to find a lasting solution.

Like I learned in sports, it is not who the captain is, but the team, the Board of Directors and the KPSGA staff. Without the support of these two groups, little could have been accomplished. To them on your behalf, a hearty thank you.

I would also like to thank our Corporate Sponsors for their unwavering support to the association; Royal African Safaris, Saruni Camps, Cheli & Peacock, Southern Cross Safaris (Mombasa), Gamewatchers Safaris, Safarilink Aviation, Origins Safaris, On safari Kenya, Africa House Safaris, Lowis & Leakey Safaris, Sino-Africa Safari Co. Ltd, Kicheche Camp, Cottars 1920'S Camp and The Tamarind Group Thank you once again for being with us in 2022 and we look forward to even more success next year in 2023! May you and your families have a safe, healthy, and very happy holiday.



**Edwin Selemo -
Chairman**

BUSH MATTERS

The Big 5 refers to five large mammals found in Africa which are the lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and cape buffalo. So why not a hippo, or a giraffe – they are quite big, aren't they? The hippo certainly is. The reason for the Big 5 name is that these five animals were the hardest to shoot by big-game hunters as they are particularly ferocious when cornered and injured.

Did you know there is also the little 5, the ugly 5, the shy 5, the impossible 5 and the beautiful 5?

Most of the travellers who look forward to finding the Big 5 are unaware of the origin of this terminology, if they did, I wonder whether it would be used as much. It is a bit of a shame as sometimes visitors are obsessed in seeing the Big 5 and forget to pay attention to all the other amazing sights and sounds that Africa has to offer. So as guides we should also give some time to giraffe, zebra and impala as well as all the birds and the smaller animals.

The Little 5

The Little 5 are not necessarily rare, the list was created by guides who wanted people to look at the smaller and more elusive species in the African wilderness. The names for the Little 5 is a contradiction in sheer size to the Big 5 animals. They include the ant lion which is often found in sandy areas and is the size of an ant; the leopard tortoise; the elephant shrew (which is an insect eating mammal with a long nose); the rhino beetle and buffalo weaver. The buffalo weaver is a common bird which is often seen in acacia trees and the rhino beetle. Rhino beetles are part of the largest species of beetles in the world reaching 6cm in length. They have two large horns on their bodies which the males use in fighting.

The Ugly 5

I think it's a real shame that the Ugly 5 have been given this grouping, not something to be proud of really. However, they include the underdogs on the African plains and they have just as an important role as any of the other African animals. The members of this most exclusive of clubs include the hyena, wildebeest, vulture, warthog and the marabou stork. There are often numerous documentaries about the antics, the migration and the unusual habits of these species so these animals are certainly worth a tick in the book. They add to our African experience and are wonderful to see! How can you call a comically cute hyena ugly?

These mammals are relatively common throughout eastern Africa although most people will know that one of the best places to see wildebeest is in the Masai Mara during the migration around the Mara River area where they are attracted to carcasses along with their friends the vulture and the marabou stork.

The Shy 5

The Shy 5 are a completely different set of animals highlighting those more elusive and lesser-known species which include the largest rodent in Africa. They include the pangolin, the armadillo, the porcupine, the armadillo and the bat-eared fox. All are nocturnal animals, which makes seeing these animals even more difficult to spot yet rewarding when you do see them. These sightings are certainly ones that will stick in your mind and getting a great photo of them also proves to be an enormous challenge!

The Impossible 5

These are certainly very rare and tricky to see, I've only seen two of these. They include the Armadillo, the black leopard, pangolin, melanistic serval cat and caracal (all in the wild). I say 'all in the wild' because there are a number of these animals in captivity and what is the challenge of seeing them in an enclosure, frankly this is cheating! As well as being a member of the Impossible 5, the armadillo is also a member of the Shy 5 so consider yourself lucky if you get to see this wonderful animal. Well, the term is impossible!

The Beautiful 5

As the saying goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Indeed, this phrase points out that beauty can be a subjective thing.

However, there are some things that pretty much all people would find beautiful. For example, we would agree that baby animals are nice to look at. Seeing all the babies is a sight to behold! There are also sunsets, where warm colours fill the sky. What else is pleasing to the eye? How about a garden full of flowers, or a star-filled sky on a dark night? Yes, in the eye of the beholder, all these things are beautiful!

Peter Kamau

Silver Guide

GENTLE AND GIGANTIC

So, Stop. For the world's most gentle giants. Literally

The only mammals born with horns. So, tall, they don't lie down to give birth. These horns help them absorb shock as they hit the ground to start life in the wild. With blood pressure that almost always dwarfs any other land mammals anywhere in the world, they are unique as they come.

When hunted and threatened, they run a good one. A kick to the skull of any prey, well connected could be fatal in a split second. These humongous beasts are ruthless, effective and no nonsense.

But even the best of dancers leave the stage at one time or the other. Willingly or under duress. These majestic, graceful, nonchalant and elegant mates are sadly going extinct. Very, very few left in the wide wild world and like an era of an enchanting and spell binding champion, let us all go out and enjoy they while they are still around.

Therefore, then, ladies and gentlemen, in such an odious world that we live in, go out and be gentle, go out and be ruthless in your fights, stand tall in the face of your adversities, go out, absorb and expel shock and pressure even in your most delicate of life moments. Go out and kickass. Go out and chart your own path. Go out and be a trailblazer.

Go out and be a giraffe. Go out and enjoy this world giraffe day

Go out!



Mohammed Billow

Gold Guide

BUSH MATTERS

We made some interesting observations about the red billed oxpeckers ever since August 2020 when we brought our horses to Maasai Mara, Olerai Conservancy, which is situated along C14, Aitong road between Talek and Naboisho Conservancy.

During the day our horses forage free amongst the wildlife on the grassy plains of the 5000-acre piece of wildlife haven. Horses are pretty much creatures of habit and they come to the barn themselves late afternoons. At night, we lock them in a big barn to keep them protected from predators and allow them a good night's sleep in a safe environment. Of course, it didn't take long and we would find the horses covered in millions of ticks roaming through the fields and the bushes. How excited we were when we would go out, to check on the herd during the day and found that oxpeckers started to have come sitting

on the horses and climbing all over them. Thinking, wonderful, these helpful little birds will assist us in keeping the tick infestation of the horses at bay!

This excitement soon started to fade and reality hit! Horses came in from grazing with blood gushing down their necks, withers, tails.



After washing off the clotted blood we could find round peck marks as the source of blood, roughly 5mm in diameter. Somehow these oxpeckers must have a good sense for the location of blood vessels. If we go out, we even see them leaning their beaks on the bloodstream, collecting a beak full of the treasured red body fluid and raising their heads up into their necks to swallow the sap. We have not observed running blood on any of the wildlife in our area, even though we frequently see oxpeckers on impalas, zebras, buffalos and giraffe. Wondering whether the wildlife has thicker skin, lower lying blood vessels or both? We started dressing our horses with hoodies/vests like scarecrows which kept the vampiristic birds off the horses for a while but soon the birds got used to the horses in clothes to the point that the oxpeckers would even start picking under the edge of the garment!

Nadine Ospelkaus

Bronze Member

Ensuring of Professional Development of Guides in the 21st Century

Strathmore university School of Tourism and Hospitality in partnership with Ecotourism Kenya and Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association among other industry partners will be offering an exclusive training course for professionals in tour and travel operations on Tour Interpretation: Making a Leading Professional Safari Guide

Key Areas of Discussion will include:

- Designing effective and memorable interpretation stories
- Effective Communication Skills Interpretation, & Interpersonal Skills
- Soft skills, Personal branding, and social media
- Cross Cultural Intelligence (CI) and PR
- A Top Guide's tool Kit and Wilderness First Aid
- Top guides as destination ambassadors
- High standards of professionalism
- Troubleshooting and problem-solving in rural environments
- Ethics in the natural environment

The training course will be running early in 2023, be on the lookout for more information.

KPSGA Secretariat

BUSH MATTERS

Citizen Science – A call to participate

As we're all out on our safaris we often see interesting, and sometimes rare mammals & birds. Please contribute your mammal sightings to the Mammal Atlas of Kenya (MAKENYA) through a free app, available on google playstore. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.spotteron.makenya>
You can also upload your records via the website on <https://www.spotteron.com/makenya/>

Please also contribute your birding records to the Kenya Bird Map through the free BirdLasser app.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.lasser.birdlasser>

You can also upload your records via the website on <https://kenya.birdmap.africa/>

For both the Mammal Atlas and the Bird Map, you'll have to register first and go through the instructions you receive via email, before you can begin uploading your records.

For all other biodiversity, we highly recommend iNaturalist, another FREE app and website that allows you to upload photos and sounds of ANY lifeform you come across, whether you know what it is or not. Curators and other 'fundis' will come along to help identify it. Your records are uploaded onto a map, via the gps information on your phone or camera, and correctly identified (and verified) records are utilised by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). The app is intuitive and easy to use:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.inaturalist.android>

The website has a lot more functionality and allows you to explore the world's biodiversity easily:

<https://inaturalist.org>

I urge everyone to sign up for any one of these (or all of them) and start uploading your records of interesting biodiversity records as you travel around Kenya.

Zarek Cockar

Gold Member



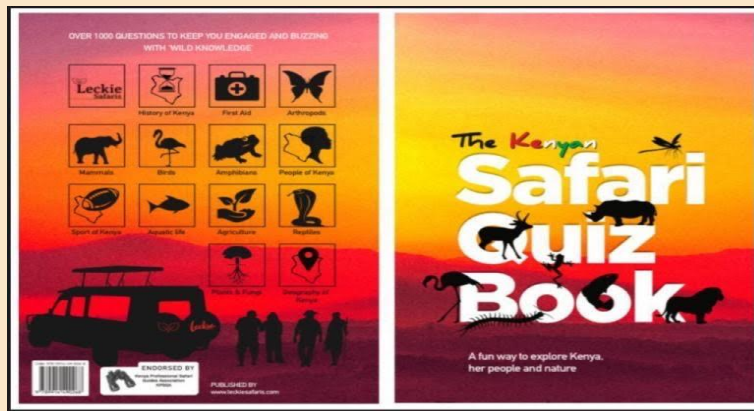
BOOKS FOR SALE



The Kenya Safari Quiz Book

The Kenya Safari Quiz Book was created by Bronze members, Iain & Antonia Leckie. After passing the Bronze exam, they wanted to create a resource to help others study for the exam. This has turned into an excellent book, which families and friends can take on safari to test their knowledge around the campfire. After previous safari quiz books have gone out of print and become harder to find, this is the newest (and we think maybe the best) quiz book on the market.

The Kenya Safari Quiz Book is available at a discounted price of KSH 1,550/- through the KPSGA office.



Grasses of East Africa by Dino Martins at Ksh. 1800/-

Wayside Flowers of East Africa by Teresa Sapielha at Ksh. 600/-

Insects of East Africa by Dino Martins at Ksh. 1500/-

Butterflies of East Africa by Dino Martins at Ksh. 1500/

WEBSITE, ONLINE LIBRARY, & SOCIAL MEDIA

KPSGA’s new and improved website now includes a FREE Online Library where current members have unlimited access to a growing portfolio of educational videos, images, articles, books, scientific papers, diagrams, recommendations, and much more! Please do take advantage of this by visiting

<https://safariguides.org/login>

If this is your first-time logging in, please select “forgot password” and follow the prompts sent to the email address you input. From here, go back to <https://safariguides.org/subscription> to access all the content in the library. For those who are looking for jobs, please contact the KPSGA office for your name to be uploaded on the website under the jobseekers list.

Please also be sure to join in with many great discussions and sharing of knowledge on the KPSGA

Facebook Group: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/141344942542630>

We’d also like to draw our members’ attention to some other excellent natural history focused groups on Facebook where participants can post images or questions for experts to identify and provide information. Interesting articles and relevant videos and research publications are regularly shared.

- East African Snakes, Other Reptiles, & Amphibians:

<https://web.facebook.com/groups/eastafricanreptiles/>

- Mammals of East Africa: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/3909546555818971/>

- Arthropods & Other Invertebrates of East Africa: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/548219361946567/>

- Plants & Flowers of East Africa: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/plafloea/>

- Mushrooms & Fungi of East Africa: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/870778116593926>

- Birding in Kenya: <https://web.facebook.com/groups/834361437158830/>

2023 EXAM DATES

BRONZE

25th January 22nd February 29th March 26th April 31st May 28th June
26th July 30th August 27th September 25th October 29th November

SILVER

16th February 23rd March 20th April 25th May 22nd June
21st September 19th October 23rd November

GOLD

*April /May and November 2023.

*The dates will be communicated depending on availability of candidates, examiners and venue.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

We wish all our Christian members a merry Christmas and all of you a very happy & prosperous New Year.

