



# KPSGA

## NEWSLETTER

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December 2015

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### MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

This year we admitted 103 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 31 Bronze Level members who have moved on to Silver Level. Zarek Cockar and Elphas Njuki in May this year sat the Gold Level exam and passed. Please join us in congratulating them on achieving this.

We are all upbeat that tourism will recover after the separation of the ministry of tourism from other portfolios, and the subsequent commitment of the current Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism to fully implement the recommendations of the Tourism Recovery Task Force.

Over this year we have witnessed unprecedented livestock incursions into our National Parks and Game Reserves. These incursions did water down the wilderness experience that tourists seek. The recent poisoning of the Marsh Pride members by herdsmen in the Masai Mara is just one of the consequences of these incursions. The Kenya Wildlife Service and the County Governments must put their acts together to decisively deal with this problem which is threatening the viability of our wildlife safari experience in National Parks and Game Reserves.

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

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 2016.

***Preston Mutinda***  
***Board Chairman***

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## BUSH MATTERS

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### **Lions and Tree Climbing**

We have over this year observed the frequency of lions climbing trees in the Masai Mara increase dramatically. In 'guide talks' we have postulate all sorts of theories to explain this phenomenon, ranging from the theory that they are running away from flies and other gnats that bother them at ground level, to the theory that they are using trees as vantage points to spot prey. Others think they do so in order to catch refreshing breezes which are limited at ground level due to vegetation cover.



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Whatever the reason, tree climbing by lions is currently neither rare nor unusual since it has been reported widely in Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, Queen Elizabeth National Park in Uganda and further south it has been reported in Kruger National Park in South Africa and Savuti in Botswana.

The ambivalence and hesitation with which lions take their clumsy steps while climbing trees betrays them – they are certainly not built to climb trees. However, I think it would be useful for some research to be conducted to establish whether all lions climb trees or only certain pride members or individuals within prides do so.

**John Ekarani**

**Bronze Level Guide**

### **Some Effects of Climate Change on Tourism**

The city of Paris was a beehive of activity over the last two weeks. Thousands of delegates from 195 nations across the globe, Kenya included, converged to discuss a critical issue – climate change, which is impacting on every aspect of human life. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientists have been observing and recording variations in climate characteristics such as temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind and severe weather events. Global warming, which is the overall warming of the planet based on average temperature over the entire surface of the Earth was the biggest subject of discussion during the Conference of Parties (COP21).

Scientists reckon that between 1880 and 2012 there was an increase in global temperature by 0.85°C. This increase has been significant enough to cause unprecedented melting of glaciers in Antarctica, rise in sea levels, alteration of frequency and intensity of rain, drought and hurricanes among many other effects. Anthropogenic (human) factors, mainly greenhouse gas emissions are to blame for global warming and its consequences which are negatively impacting on humans. The deliberations of COP21 were meant to get all nations to make firm commitments to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and get the main culprits, mainly developed nations, to commit financial support for developing nations to cope with the vagaries of climate change.



Recent floods in Narok hampered access to the Masai Mara, albeit temporarily.

Climate change impacts tourism directly in a negative way. Tourism, especially in the developing world where we live is predominantly nature based, so whatever affects nature affects our tourism. We have noticed an increase in livestock incursions into conservation areas, especially the Masai Mara, Samburu, Buffalo Springs, Shaba, Amboseli and the two Tsavo's. Erratic and inadequate rainfalls have meant more frequent and intense droughts. This has meant scarcity of pasture for pastoralists' livestock in their usual grazing areas leading them to venture into wildlife conservation areas, thereby eroding the natural appeal of these areas to tourists.

Torrential rains, such as the ones witnessed currently cause floods which in turn cause damage to tourism infrastructure, cause delays on the roads that boomerang into missed flight connections, unsatisfied tourists and loss of revenue on the part of the safari operators. Rainfall and drought seasonal variability also causes alterations to vegetation and ecological zones, including biodiversity concentrations. This may also alter animal habits, such as the annual wildebeest migration between the Masai Mara and Serengeti as the animals try to cope with the resultant changes. The sum total of all these effects may lead to erosion of wildlife tourism viability of these areas.

Sea level rise is a threat to beach tourism. Increased temperature leads to melting of glaciers which leads to more water in the oceans. This coupled with the above normal heating of the sea surfaces in different regions of the globe lead to stormy currents that lead to abnormally higher tides which may devastate beaches.

There are many other ripple effects of climate change on tourism. It is worth mentioning that tourism itself is a contributor to climate change. Airliners, Sealiners, safari/tour motor vehicles and motorised boats, hotels, camps and lodges all contribute to the increasing greenhouse gas emissions around the globe. Trends show that travel for leisure around the globe is increasing, so this will certainly mean more contribution of greenhouse gases by the tourism sector. Players in the sector can and indeed must take measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance carbon sinks as a way of contributing to climate change mitigation.

***Tom Lesarge***

### **When The Hunter and Hunted Are Both Lucky**

I was on a mid-morning game drive in the Mara Triangle when I saw what I thought was bizarre – a fully grown male impala and a lioness standing in front of each other as if conversing. What came to my mind was that this was a case of that odd unusual friendship of species.



My guests and I looked around for the male impala's harem or fellow bachelors, but we saw neither. As we inched closer, we noticed that the impala was an old sickly male that was probably unable to keep up with its fellow bachelors due to its poor state of health. For some time, the lioness did not seem interested in the impala. She took her time looking around and looking back at the impala. We felt like she was going to amble away from the sickly impala, but we were wrong. She was probably just giving the impala time to internalise and accept the reality of the grave situation it had found itself in.

On its part the impala had its own plans, since in a split second it charged the lioness with all the strength it could muster from its frailty! Big mistake – by its desperate action, the impala simply aroused the predatory instincts of the lioness. In one swift sweep of its left front paw, she brought the impala crushing to the ground headfirst and went ahead to strangle it out of breath. The hunter was lucky to get such an easy catch and the hunted was lucky to be put out of its misery. As for the lioness's cubs who were observing the drama from their hideout of bushes not too far from us, it was early lunch served fresh and sizzling.

***Tiampati Manei***

***Bronze Level Member***

### **From the Bush to Shining in the City**

I was invited as a guest to grace this year's graduation ceremony of Wildlife Clubs of Kenya Centre for Tourism Training and Research. My eye caught one of our members among the graduands.



Junior Kosen after receiving his certificate.

While working at Siana Springs Tented Camp in 2012, Junior OleKosen joined KPSGA. He passed the Bronze Level exam on his first attempt. With the ambition of enhancing his knowledge and skills in his career, he opted to join the Centre for Tourism Training and Research to take a certificate course in Tour Guiding and Administration in 2014. After one year of successful class work, field attachment and taking exams, it was time to graduate. From the graduation bulletin, I noticed that Junior was among the students who had attained distinctions in their studies. However, the best was still to come.

When the names of the graduands were called out to receive their certificates, it was announced that Junior was the best student. He was the best because at KPSGA we set the pace. Having graduated, two things are in Junior's mind -preparing to sit his KPSGA Silver Level exam in 2016 and being a job creator but not a job seeker. He and his brother have made plans to set up a tour company through which they will advance their careers and create jobs for other Kenyans.

***Tom Lesarge***

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## COMPLIANCE

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The Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) regulations require that every individual guide is licensed in order to work legally. Non-compliance attracts a monetary penalty or a jail term or both the monetary penalty and the jail term. This is therefore to call on all of you as professional and responsible members of this association to comply with this requirement.

General requirements for licensing are:

- Valid membership to the association;
- Certificate of Good Conduct from the Kenya Police Service;
- Proof of formal training in tourist guiding.

Guides who do not have formal training in guiding, are required to take a one-month competency training programme in either Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (KWSTI) or Kenya Utalii College (KUC). Proof of application for admission to this course will be accepted for next year's license application in lieu of formal training in guiding.

For a guide who guides by driving, the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) regulations require the following of him/her in order to drive a tourist service vehicle:

- Possession of a valid driver's license for the class of that vehicle;
- Possession of a valid public service vehicle license;
- Possession of a valid tourism driver-guide license from the Tourism Regulatory Authority;

The 2016 dates for the above competency programme are as follows:

KWSTI (18<sup>th</sup> January, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> July and 17<sup>th</sup> October)

KUC (1<sup>st</sup> February). Other dates are to be announced later.

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## CALENDAR 2016

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### EXAMS

#### **BRONZE**

27 <sup>th</sup> January	24 <sup>th</sup> February	30 <sup>th</sup> March	27 <sup>th</sup> April
25 <sup>th</sup> May	29 <sup>th</sup> June	27 <sup>th</sup> July	31 <sup>st</sup> August
28 <sup>th</sup> September	26 <sup>th</sup> October	30 <sup>th</sup> November	

#### **SILVER**

19 <sup>th</sup> February	24 <sup>th</sup> March	21 <sup>st</sup> April	19 <sup>th</sup> May
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	22 <sup>nd</sup> September	13 <sup>th</sup> October	24 <sup>th</sup> November

#### **GOLD**

\*April 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>.

\*These dates may be altered depending on availability of examiners.

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

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday June 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **FIRST AID TRAINING**

April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The cost of the training is Ksh. 8,500 per person. Spaces are limited,so book well in advance.

## SEASON'S GREETINGS

We wish all our Christian members a merry christmas and all of you a very prosperous New Year 2016.

