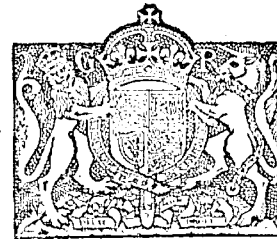


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Kenya Colony and Protectorate



GAME DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 1931

Price 1/-



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NATIVE SCOUTS.

The inadequacy of the provision, under the Estimates, for native scouts was again severely felt. A total of £100 per month for game scouts, fish scouts, and scouts assisting the two game and vermin control officers means that many areas must go short; for although some scouts can be employed on low rates of pay, certain of them, notably in the ivory and coastal areas, must be persons of more standing and character and correspondingly more pay.

REVENUE.

LICENCES.

The sum realized by the sale of game licences during the year was £11,604, comprised as follows:—

Game, £10,098. Game Bird, £306. Trout, £910.

The following comparative table, giving the numbers of the several game licences over the last eight years, is of interest:—

LICENCES	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Visitor's Full ..	26	56	35	24	27	36	43	34
Visitor's Private Land ..	33	38	43	25	29	20	11	11
Serving Officer's ..	..	..	..	..	..	5	5	2
Resident's Full ..	293	367	373	425	301	315	231	258
Resident's 14-day ..	133	102	140	108	139	135	138	160
Resident's Private Land ..	646	744	765	817	647	519	393	327
Native Employee ..	18	22	27	30	14	13	6	10
Bird ..	954	1,268	1,324	1,360	1,050	1,134	1,112	1,191
Elephant, 1st ..	111	168	173	170	24	37	23	27
" 2nd ..	37	57	57	64	1	4	1	2
Rhino, 1st ..	76	112	117	157	65	63	46	47
" 2nd ..	9	9	11	17	15	17	9	7
Giraffe ..	3	14	8	..	1	6	3	..
Ostrich ..	2	4	4	..	18	17	12	19
Trophy Dealer's ..	54	72	98	137	106	..	..	..
Game Dealer's ..	4	4	7	7	4	..	..	..
Governor's Permit ..	..	..	9	4	9	27	78	28
Total Revenue £	11,499	17,681	16,490	15,478	11,073	13,285	11,754	11,604

The following analysis table of licences issued during the year is also of interest:—

Licences	European	Indian	Goan	Arab and Somali	Native	TOTAL
Visitor's Full ..	£100 34	..	..	..	..	34
Visitor's Private Land ..	£10 11	..	..	..	..	11
Serving Officer's ..	£20 2	..	..	..	..	2
Resident's Full ..	£10 248	10	..	..	..	258
Resident's 14-day ..	£3 158	2	..	..	..	160
Resident's Private Land ..	£2 310	9	3	5	..	327
Native Employee ..	£2 10	..	..	..	..	10
Bird ..	Sh. 10 695	145	100	103	148	1,191
Elephant, 1st (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£50 3	..	..	..	..	7
Elephant, 1st (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£50 20	..	..	..	..	20
Elephant, 2nd (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£100 ..	..	..	..	..	..
Elephant, 2nd (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£100 2	..	..	..	..	2
Rhino, 1st (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£10 16	..	..	..	..	16
Rhino, 1st (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£10 31	..	..	..	..	31
Rhino, 2nd (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£10 ..	..	..	..	..	..
Rhino, 2nd (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£10 7	..	..	..	..	7
Giraffe (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£15 ..	..	..	..	..	..
Giraffe (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£15 ..	..	..	..	..	..
Ostrich (under Resident's Full Licence) ..	£1 9	..	..	..	..	9
Ostrich (under Visitor's Full Licence) ..	£1 10	..	..	..	..	10
Governor's Permits ..	28	..	..	..	..	28
Governor's Permits for Elephants in Meru District—						
Bull ..	£10 20	..	..	..	..	20
Cow ..	£5 20	..	..	..	..	20
Duplicates of Lost Licences Sh. 10	2	..	..	..	..	2
Visitor's Yearly Trout Licences ..	£5 1	..	..	..	..	1
Visitor's Fortnightly Trout Licences ..	£2 8	..	..	..	..	8
Visitor's 24-hourly Trout Licences ..	Sh. 10 10	..	..	..	..	10
Resident's Yearly Trout Licences ..	Sh. 25 547	..	3	..	..	550
Resident's Fortnightly Trout Licences ..	Sh. 10 199	..	..	..	..	199
Resident's 24-hourly Trout Licences ..	Sh. 3 616	3	20	2	..	641
TOTAL ..	3,021	169	126	110	148	3,574

sportsmanship of the European community in Kenya is provided by the fact that, out of those 477 convictions, only nine were of Europeans. Indeed, as I stated in my last report, I think that serious poaching by the immigrant races has almost ceased. I say "serious" advisedly, for I know of course that a number of minor offences pass undetected. That is inevitable: but it does not greatly affect game preservation as a whole throughout the Colony.

NATIVE.

The chief menace to game in Kenya from direct human attack—by direct, I mean slaughter as opposed to peaceful ejection—is, nowadays, the poisoned arrow. So long as native poachers hunt game on foot with bow and arrow, the damage done, while serious, still remains within some bounds. It becomes more formidable when—from hides and platforms in trees—waterholes and game-paths are subjected to the ceaseless vigilant twang of bowstrings. It reaches the stage of complete destructiveness when every game-path and drinking-pool bristles with arrow-traps set off by trip cords. These arrow-traps are the most diabolical devices. They are very simple to set: four pegs, a rough bow—any piece of springy branch will do—two pieces of cord, and a poisoned arrow are all the essentials. And they are exactly 100 per cent efficient. No animal, from an elephant to a porcupine, can touch a trip wire and escape death; neither for that matter can you or I, for there is no known antidote to the poison used. I should have said more correctly that the antidote—a charm with appropriate incantations—for which infallibility is claimed, has never so far been able to prove itself, owing to the supervention of death before the completion of the essential ritual.

It is matter for grave consternation that the practice of setting these arrow-traps has grown apace. Five years ago they were almost unknown. To-day they exist by the thousand, in spite of the perpetual war waged on them and their setters by the Assistant Game Warden in charge of the Coastal zone. I have reason to fear that before long the Wakamba will copy their Wanyika neighbours and start using these infernal contrivances—a grim prospect indeed, for the Wakamba wander over an enormous area, from Tanga to the Tana, and arrow-traps in numbers spell annihilation to all but the smallest living things.

It is much to be hoped that the recent empowering legislation on the subject of poison used for tipping arrows will be

invoked to put an end to the wholesale preparation and distribution of this foul substance, which, so far as I know, has no beneficent use whatever.

In addition to poison troubles in the bush zone, there was a certain amount of communal hunting in the Trans-Mara zone during the year, a continuation of the large-scale hunting noted in my last report. Firm action by the Administration, together with such assistance as we were in a position to give, fortunately succeeded in quelling this organized poaching early on in the year.

The Northern Frontier, particularly Tanaland, was, as always, the scene of diverse poaching. In the Northern Game Reserve we rounded up several Turkana who were trapping giraffe and rhino, as well as smaller game, by means of the cruel foot snares which they construct with much skill. These snares are most horrible things, since an animal caught in one may live for days dragging a log the weight of which will just allow it to trot; the animal, unless killed at once by the poachers, is usually found with a leg broken and all chafed away by the end of the log.

ILLEGAL IVORY AND RHINO HORN TRAFFIC.

The illicit ivory and rhino horn trade conditions were much better in many parts of the Colony, owing doubtless to several large captures and sensational prosecutions in 1930, as also to the constant activity of the Assistant Game Warden in charge of the Coastal zone.

No improvement was to be noted in the area adjacent to the Italian border. I have dilated on this serious matter, in the past, *ad nauseam*; I do not intend to do more than mention it now, in view of the Anglo-Italian Commission which has recently met in Nairobi to draw up recommendations to be placed before the British and Italian Governments, for the suppression of all unauthorized movement of ivory and rhino horn across the international boundary. The attitude of the Italian delegates was so helpful that I have every hope that with this co-operation substantial progress may be made.

DAMAGE BY GAME AND VERMIN: AND ATTEMPTS AT CONTROL.

Reports of damage and requests for assistance were as widespread as ever.

Two control officers were employed throughout the year. Captain Oulton commenced operations in the Nakuru district, where bush-pig were again giving much trouble. Thence he