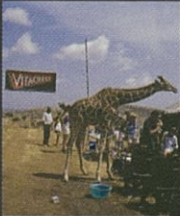
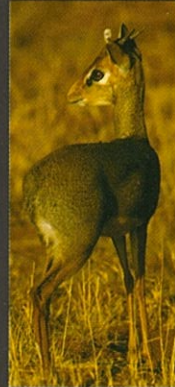
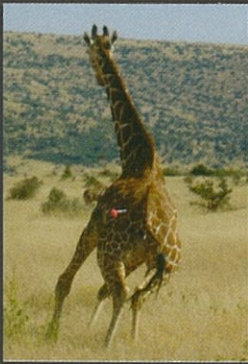
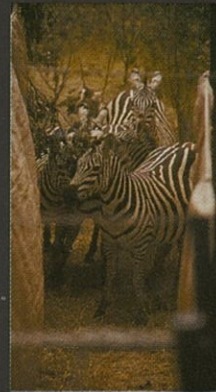


# LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY

NEWSLETTER NO. 10 October 2003



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## Introduction

My twice yearly report seems to swing from political highs of positive elections to climatic ups and downs from El Niño to droughts; all forces beyond our control yet directly effecting the wildlife and communities with whom we live and work. Once again it is a global issue that has had the greatest impact on the Conservancy's work over the past six months: World Terrorism.

The continued vulnerability of Kenya to this worldwide threat for reasons as varied as cultural diversity, to geographical position to the fact that Kenyans are so openly hospitable, makes us a soft target. With an overflowing presence of western press the smallest incident is sure to instantly spread across the world's news screens. For Lewa, Il Ngwesi and Namunyak, this has meant that planned income forecasts from what was all set to be a bumper year for visitors were slashed, leaving worrying deficits for us with responsibilities to wildlife and people alike. As I write it appears that Kenya's followers are resilient, although bookings in all the lodges are 80% down from the same time last year; this is far ahead of what was anticipated after British Airways ceased all their flights to Nairobi.

Over the same period there have been some really meaningful conservation successes; five rhino born on Lewa; 500 Burchell's zebra, 400 Impala, 50 Reticulated giraffe moved in a joint Kenya Wildlife Service /Lewa operation from private land in Laikipia (through the good offices of the Laikipia Wildlife Forum) to the National Park at Meru. A first in Kenya's history with extraordinary long term prospects for wildlife throughout the country. It means that community; public and private estate with a focus on conservation can be restocked with wildlife, based on a planned decision and commitment.

Kenya is changing, with increasing pressures on resources including land. However, wildlife is perceived as a contributor to development in arid areas and the principle of moving back large numbers of animals means that these newly developing eco-destinations can compete with Kenya's best, and wildlife wins in the deal.

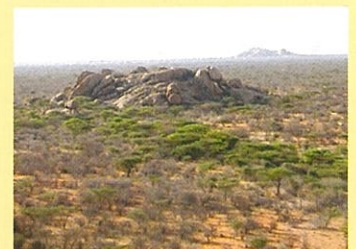
Over the same time-frame we have lost two of Lewa's most special friends; Bill Rouse and John Cook. Bill led the Lewa Board in the US as President bringing it through some real challenges to a point that with a focused and dedicated Board in place, the charity is now in a position to look at the long term challenge of funding the conservation work of Lewa. John was just the closest and warmest friend of Lewa, sourcing the first female white rhino on the Conservancy which has helped contribute to the 34 we now hold. Both of these very special men in their own individual ways will be sorely missed by us all. In a nut shell the Conservancy is strong, the ground team is dedicated and effective, we continue to receive all the political goodwill and support that we could possibly be asked for. The community programmes go from strength to strength, including receiving white rhino to boost their conservation plans. Lewa is a combined effort of many people and organisations; it is this diversity and commitment that maintains 67 rhino in safety and breeding. I thank you all for this support but we should all be quite clear this is a challenge that does not end and these animals are forever dependent on our voice and goodwill.

*Ian Craig — Executive Director*

## Community News

### Sera Conservancy

The Community differences over their core tribal land by name Sera and the fear of giving it up for wildlife conservation have come to an end. There was earnest fear that someone could take advantage and grab this land from the locals. Intensive awareness creation and education was culminated by the meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> July between Serolipi and Losesia communities, and Lawyer Stephen Mwenesi when they decided to put their differences aside in favour of conservation and agreed to form the Sera Conservancy. This is thanks to Fauna and Flora International, who have found interested donors to finance this important project, traditionally referred to as the "wildlife refuge area".



### Rugusu Springs

The Rugusu springs project has been so successful. The dry season is approaching leading to increased livestock numbers. 3000 head of cattle, sheep and goats are reported to water by the spring. The washing area is a great relieve to the women who can now do their washing and within a short while walk back home with clean clothes.

### Mutunyi water project

The progression on the implementation of the Mutunyi water project has been going on very well. The digging of the 17 kilometres of trench to the farm connections is complete. The building of the intake is almost complete. The building plan for break tanks and piping work is underway. Very soon the community will be having piped irrigation water in their farms.

*James Munyugi — Community Officer*



## LWC achieves Kenya's first mass wildlife translocation

If you were asked to move 1000 zebras, impalas and giraffes from one location to another several hundred kilometres distant, how would you do it? To a casual observer at least, the recipe appeared to be deceptively simple: 1. use a helicopter to shepherd groups of wild animals into a huge funnel made of plastic sheeting, 2. drive them up a ramp and into a container mounted on a truck, 3. transfer them by road to their new destination, and 4. repeat this until whomever is keeping score signals "Tosha! [Enough!]".

This is exactly what was asked of Lewa Wildlife Conservancy by the Kenya Wildlife Service in July this year. The purpose was to restore common plains game to Meru National Park, which had become depleted by poaching in the late 1980's. The animals were donated by several large properties in Laikipia that had wildlife to spare, and the operation was completed over a 20 day period with spectacular success.

This method of translocating wildlife with the minimum of stress and expense was perfected in South Africa. In recent years, LWC has become proficient in wildlife capture, but an operation on this scale was unprecedented in Kenya, and must be planned like a military campaign. The devil, of course, is in the details: the funnel must be placed such that the animals can't tell it's there until they are inside it; coordination must be perfect between teams responsible for closing a series of 'curtains' drawn behind the animals to prevent their escape; if zebra harems are mixed inside the container, they can kick each other to death, so the helicopter pilot must ensure he carves out single harems on each run, and so on ad infinitum.

The significance of this achievement goes far beyond proficiency in moving wildlife from A to B. As wildlife and their habitats become increasingly influenced by humans, conservationists cannot simply 'let nature take its course'. They need an ever more sophisticated management 'toolbox' to compensate. Once again, LWC has led the way in applying this important management technique.

*Dr. Nick Georgiadis, Director — Mpala Research Centre*

## Research

### Developing the role of communities in the conservation of Grevy's zebra

The Field Conservation Program funded by St Louis Zoo works with the communities of Il Ngwesi, Namunyak and Serolipi. The program has three components: community workshops, Grevy's zebra scout training, and primary school sessions on Grevy's zebra (check out the story of 'Stripe' the Grevy's zebra on our website). All three were completed over the last six months and a successful monitoring programme is now in place.

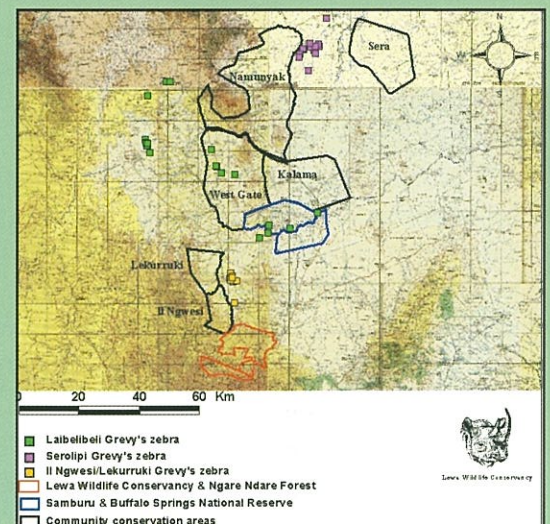
The effects of this program have been widespread with increased awareness among neighbouring communities of the importance of Grevy's zebra as an endangered species. One Samburu warrior from the Sessia community found the body of our pioneer Grevy's zebra, which had been poached. He carefully removed her radio-collar and walked about 100 km to the Namunyak headquarters to report her death and return the collar!

This active participation in the conservation of Grevy's zebra will be critical to their future survival. It is therefore essential that we make the project sustainable over at least five years and be able to increase the outreach to include communities like Sessia in the program so that they benefit from looking after this magnificent animal.

### GEF Grevy's zebra update

We had just started the GEF Grevy's zebra tracking in the October 2002 issue. Since then, we now have some valuable information on the three populations that we collared. The Il Ngwesi and Serolipi Grevy's zebra have so far remained resident in those areas, although with the coming months of the dry season we may see some shift as they seek dry season water sources. The Namunyak population has proved very interesting and there appears to be a significant corridor of north « south movement (dotted red line) between Lejuk swamp, the Laibelibeli plains and the El Bonyeki plains east of Wamba. During his study between 1967 and 1971, Hans Klingel also observed the influx of Grevy's zebra into the El Bonyeki plains following the rains, suggesting their importance as a grazing resource.

*Belinda Low — Research Officer*





## Help Lewa's Rhino Conservation Programme



Lewa's rhino population is flourishing and growing. We now have 33 Black and 33 White individuals. We have been very successful in protecting and nurturing our wildlife but it all costs money. This year has been particularly difficult for us with a serious decline in tourist revenues and as a result we are now struggling to maintain our core operations. It is ironic that as this income has declined our rhino population has increased dramatically.

We have a plan. Firstly we would like to offer all our loyal supporters the opportunity to contribute to one of our most important programmes: protecting and monitoring our rhinos. We are offering the chance to name a calf out of our growing populations; we have 8 white and 3 black rhino calves without names. In addition this Autumn (Fall) we will be launching "Friends of Lewa"; a scheme that will encourage our loyal supporters to donate with a minimum of hassle by monthly standing order. All naming and adopting options are on an annual basis (but of course the name lives forever!). Please contact me as soon as you can.

Sara Spendrup — PR Department (sara@lewa.org)

### Limited Edition Rhino Bronze

Michael Coleman has produced a beautiful rhino bronze. For \$500 you can own one. It will make a wonderful ornament for your mantelpiece! It stands six inches high and measures eight inches from nose to tail. Please apply as soon as you can. We are sure this will be a popular offer and we need the help!

Contact Helen Christian lewusa@erols.com for more information.



### Lewa House - New Tourist Destination

We have been able to offer a new, special tourist destination on Lewa. Lewa House is a 6 bedroom facility with unrivalled views over the north of Kenya. The mess is large with sitting/dining room and spacious veranda. There are three guest cottages, each with two ensuite bedrooms. The house is delightfully decorated and staffed with a wonderful team led by David and Mungai (himself a great chef!). The house also has a swimming pool and all in all is ideal for those who want to be pampered in the Conservancy or even hold a conference here. You can take it exclusively. It would be an unforgettable experience.

For more details please contact Liz in liz@lewa.org



### Earthwatch Report

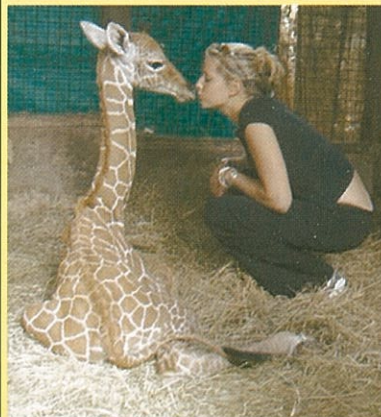
The Earthwatch Institute (EWI) Zebra Research Project has come to the fruitful completion of its third year despite travel advisories that led to cancellations and no signing up of some teams. EWI though has realised the ecological value of Laikipia and Samburu, and has established the Samburu/Laikipia Conservation Research Initiative (CRI) program with Lewa's Grevy's Project being one of the critical focal projects in the area. This is a great achievement considering that EWI supports only five CRI's in the world.

Geoffrey Chege, the field co-ordinator of the zebra's project will be proceeding to the University of Kent, UK for a one-year postgraduate course in Conservation Biology. Geoffrey's new acquired skills will help Lewa solve its emerging ecological needs. We are proud to see Chege proceed to UK to further his studies and look forward to his return to lead the Lewa Research office into the future.



### Orphans on Lewa

In the first week of July the wardens from Sera Conservancy brought in a tiny little female giraffe. Since it was not the first time for us we were very successful in getting her stabilized quickly. She was named Twigle and is now growing by the day in her new home on Lewa. Her only worry is the two cheetahs, Toki and



Sambu, who are by now almost fully grown and are considering her as a tasty snack... We will be watching them closely. Sera, the older orphaned giraffe is now very much an independent sub-adult. She is now roaming Lewa exactly as she feels like and she likes coming through

our office blocks to have a nap during lunch hours!

"Lewa Wildlife Conservancy works as a catalyst for conservation of wildlife and its habitat. It does this through the protection and management of species, the initiation and support of community conservation and development programmes and the education of neighbouring areas in the value of wildlife"



## The Hay Bailing Project

During the last rains, Lewa was blessed with excessive grass, certainly more than would be used by its wildlife. Lots of it would just dry up and go to waste. Lewa identified a youth group residing on the eastern border that for a long time sought assistance to start small income generating activities. We realised this was one noble line of support. Lewa loaned this group some Kshs 39,000 to buy a hand bailer and after a short training session they are in serious business. This far, the group has produced close to 1500 bales, which will definitely fetch them lots of money in the next few weeks. The youth group will repay the loan as they sell, on a 5% interest.

*James Munyugi — Community Officer*



## A note from the Lewa Education Trust Chairman

Exciting times for the Education Trust. We have, with all your help achieved a huge amount. We have started dreaming, obviously dangerous but we have already begun to succeed! We have been promised the funds to build all the classrooms for Munanda school over a six year period thanks to Stephen Matheson. Another donor, Dr. Croucher of Gemini Foundation, is funding a playground and a football field. As a result of this, at one of our meetings we decided that we should start making Mutunyi school, the last of our five primary schools needing new classrooms, our next project. Within weeks of this discussion, we were promised all the funds required to finish the classrooms by Deborah Smith Callahan and her husband Pete. More dreams; we are now examining the option of spreading our net wider and possibly supporting other local schools as well as those in communities with whom we have close relationships. A very exciting time and I feel that it will be getting more so. A huge thank you to all our supporters and also to Anne Ruhui, our Executive officer, for doing such a fantastic job.

*Will Craig - Chairman — Lewa Education Trust*



## New Horizons

For once the community program has a new initiative on women income generating programs. Through the courtesy of Alexandra Dixon, Lewa now has \$10,000 to develop a women's group Micro Credit Loaning Scheme. The first three beneficiaries include Jane Women Group, Jikoni Women Group and Umoja Waso Women Group so hopefully the scheme will take off by September this year. The women will utilise these resources to develop small local industries for traditional artefacts and retail on local produce such as maize, beans and bee keeping.

*James Munyugi — Community Officer*



## Works and Logistics

It's a pleasant thing being wanted and Richard Moller has been sweet talking me since April. Requests for logistical support have been numerous with our contract for mass game relocation and the annual Safaricom Marathon being the largest to date. The Safaricom Marathon went well with slightly more permanent infrastructure of 16 toilets, a stage, a campsite and the finish area being developed.

There have been four Security houses refurbished, two small houses built, a tented camp established for trainee research staff, an 800m three phase cable to the Deputy Director's house (in an effort to maximize generator efficiency), a new larger cheetah cage constructed and at present a new classroom is being constructed at the Lewa School.....and the list goes on.

In May, flash floods in the Ngare Ndare forest removed piping which supplies Lewa's water. Above the forest, rainfall was in excess of 2 inches an hour! After watching a neighbour repair his pipeline three times, we postponed repair and dammed creeks to continue water supply until the rains ceased. Now the line is repaired and strengthened.

An interesting project is the fitting of two cameras at the gap on the northern boundary. Pictures are sent by radio wave to a midway station before being re beamed to Lewa HQ where a television screen and computer to record footage is set up. This is on-going and not established yet but we are slowly putting in place the infrastructure to support this. The Research Department will be able to monitor what wildlife passes in and out and even be able to identify individual animals.

I see Richard walking towards my office with a nervous smile. That means he wants something.

*Simon Dugdale — Logistics Manager*





## Safaricom Marathon

This year's Safaricom Marathon, the fourth in the series, proved to be very different and despite a number of hitches was the most successful ever.

Firstly we had to cope with the departure from Lewa of Sarah Watson. Sarah left with her husband in late 2002 and we wondered how we would cope. She had developed an encyclopedic knowledge of the occasion and potentially it would not happen at all. Thankfully Sarah started to work for Tusk Trust in UK and Charlie Mayhew, her boss, kindly allowed Sarah to devote much of her time to the planning and execution of the event. (Phew! - said David Parkinson on whose shoulders the event fell).

Secondly we had the changing global environment and other world events which combined to leave us with no BA flights (or travel insurance for our all important overseas runners), the partial, then complete and then back to partial withdrawal of the British Army - so important to the event in the past. Thankfully many overseas runners did ignore the advice and still come providing a significant amount of the revenue (thank you everyone) and the British Army provided a large amount of the needed equipment.

Safaricom remained a stalwart party in their support and sponsorship. In addition to increasing their up front sponsorship Michael Joseph and his team cajoled 50 runners from the company to complete the event and in the process raise a staggering Ksh 3.6m (over \$50,000) - thank you again.

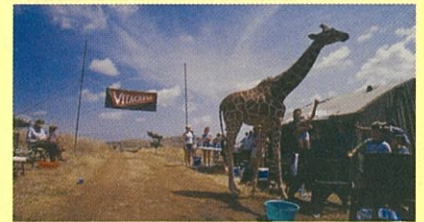
On the day the run went superbly. Over 450 official runners (and some who weren't) ran the full and half marathons and there was a well supported children's race as well as a VIP "race" that is becoming a regular feature. Most of the wildlife behaved (only the odd close call with rhino) however Sera, the hand reared giraffe stole the show by completing most of the course without submitting her entry fee - a drawback that did not prevent her from stopping for oranges at least two water stops (she did not get a goodie bag). There were many good times (see the web site for details) and much good fun had by all. The carnival atmosphere at the finish a joy to behold and is developing year on year.

This year by running the event on Saturday we managed to persuade many runners and spectators to stay for the "party in the park". Hootenanny came up from Nairobi and set the place alight (thankfully not literally) and the Kenya Regimental Association ran a very busy bar. I do not think many runners complained about the noise although it did go on til late.

My thanks go to all who helped to make it the best ever. From Safaricom, to all other sponsors, to all the helpers (virtually all of Lewa's staff put in time quite willingly) and outside volunteers (particularly the absolutely invaluable water stops personnel who spent a long day in the sun). A special mention goes to Simon Dugdale, Joffy Bastard and Crackers who between them handled all logistic details.

We believe we will raise more money this year for the charities: Il Ngwesi and Namunyak communities, the Bill Woodley Trust, Lewa's schools and the Nanyuki Cottage Hospital. We are hoping for over \$100,000 profit. If you have not sent in your sponsorship yet, it is not too late.

David Parkinson — Deputy Director



## Elephant poaching halted in Donyo Wasin

In early 2002, reports of severe Elephant poaching in the Northern Mathews Range, in the area of Donyo Wasin were reported by scouts from Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust (NWCT), situated just to the South. Their security teams and communication network at this time were very stretched and could not combat this extra pressure.

An urgent plan had to be established if this wave of poaching was to be stopped. A rescue package of funds for extra game scouts and better communication was very kindly donated by Marcel Burgauer Foundation for the Protection of the African Elephant. Two new repeater stations were set up on the top of Ol Donyo Sabache (Lolokwe) in order to provide NWCT with more efficient coverage of communication to these distant areas. Six extra game scouts were employed to monitor the area with radios and solar panels for battery charging. You may ask how on earth did all this equipment, including aerial masts, steel safes to house the repeaters, cement, wire mesh, rations and the rest, get to the top of this mountain? Well the Royal Airforce helped out with a Chinook Helicopter and all equipment was dropped off in one go. A huge logistical help to say the least. At the same time, to the East of NWCT was in its infancy. Elephant from Reserve, Donyo Wasin and Shaba National Reserve use making it a vital link in overall North Sera have had more than its share of poaching in the past and there still remains that threat. The elevation of the repeater site on Lolokwe covers the Sera area thankfully, making monitoring of wildlife, poachers and security more available.

Richard Moller — Security and Wildlife Coordinator