



# PORINI

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## What Kenyan Parks HAVE TO OFFER

INSIDE

3 NEWS  
Hummingbird revolution

5 ASK THE  
EXPERTS  
Silent killers pose threat  
to environment

10 ANIMAL OF THE  
MONTH  
Minting cash from  
chameleon farming

11 KNOW YOUR  
PARK  
At home with Lord  
McMillan

# Who said the elephant can't dance?

**T**he end of 2011 marks a major milestone for the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS); we are on the final phase of our second strategic plan. It has been six years of hard work, sacrifice, and learning. We started a journey that had not been made, took a path few have trodden, and what seemed impossible has become possible. When we launched the first Strategic Plan, it appeared insurmountable and required tremendous amount of collective effort, clear vision, risk taking and determination to change our approaches to virtually all our processes. Halfway through the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, we realised we had accomplished over 80 per cent of our targets and decided to review our current 2008/2012 plan.

We have many achievements to celebrate; we successfully navigated through 2007 and 2008 following a political unrest and a global recession. From then on, we have been on upward trend posting an income of KSh 3.16 billion in 2010. We also launched an Endowment Fund in 2009 – a long-term sustainability strategy for all our conservation efforts – our target is to raise USD 100million by 2020. We are now organising a series of activities to raise funds and involve the community more in conservation. Notably, “To Hells Gate on a Wheelbarrow” and “Cycle with the Rhino” have been some of the events that have received good response from the public and our stakeholders.

We are working on a new strategic direction. It will centre on strengthening the wildlife and conservation industry by encouraging the active participation of all stakeholders. We believe that everyone must take responsibility in terms of wildlife management and conservation. We intend to continue reaching out to communities in our efforts to ensure peaceful co-existence with wildlife. Apart from enhanced co-existence between wildlife and people, we will be encouraging communities to set up conservancies, eco-lodges and ranches and other tourism-related enterprises that can be their source of income. We already have successful examples like Lewa conservancy in Nanyuki, Ol Pejeta ranch in Mount Kenya, Ole Rai community conservancy in Kajiado, Chololo in Laikipia, Kimana, Mara among others. Other players we are encouraging to join us in our mission are non governmental organisations,

international agencies, hotel owners, and government agencies like the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, KFS, KEFRI among others.

We will continue focusing on ensuring we are financially stable by providing efficient services and thinking long-term in terms of diversifying our sources of revenue. The tourism industry is very capricious with factors like climate change, political instability, global recession, and inflation affecting the sector locally and globally.

As a way of growing our revenue, we intend to heavily invest in marketing and publicising the less visited parks in the western circuit and Meru. Those regions have a lot to offer our local and international visitors and we look forward to seeing an increased interest in these areas.

Through our conservation activities, we will be eyeing the Carbon Fund. Since 2005, the Carbon Finance team has committed over 850 million into companies and projects that generate emission reduction credits.

While we focus on our core business of conservation, we will not forget to strengthen and encourage professionalism within the KWS work force. The organisation will continue to support and empower its employees by providing the appropriate tools, environment and training needed to ensure optimum productivity. Employees remain the biggest asset that the organisation prides in.

With support from our government and industry stakeholders, we have found that anything is achievable. Like Louis V. Gerstner, Jr. in his bestseller book *Who Says Elephants Can't Dance?* writes about IBM's historic turnaround, we too have in our own way made a remarkable difference to Kenya's conservation efforts. Our elephant is now dancing to the tune of success.

We are counting on the support of our stakeholders and our government to continue with the dance. We invite you to visit the parks during this festive season and sample our guest houses and bandas. ■

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## Moving elephants to address conflict



Loading an elephant into a lorry during the translocation exercise.

Kenya Wildlife Service has successfully completed translocating 62 elephants into the Maasai Mara

National Reserve from Narok North. This is the first phase of the exercise aimed at eliminating human-elephant conflict, and improving community livelihoods.

Narok North is designated as one of the human-wildlife conflict hotspots in Kenya with elephants identified as the most problematic wildlife species. Out of the 9,299 human-wildlife conflict cases reported in the last decade at the

KWS Narok station, 5,052 (54 percent) are attributed to elephants. Outcomes of human-elephant conflict include human deaths and injuries, crop destruction, and property destruction.

The exercise will be carried out in phases to allow post-release monitoring of the translocated elephants. □

Source: [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke)

## Rhino cycle raises KSh 6M



Annie Kinuthia Standard Chartered Bank's Regional Head presents a cheque to Mr. Julius Kipng'etich KWS Director during the 2011 cycle with the rhino event.

The eighth edition of the Cycle with the Rhino event held at the Lake Nakuru National Park on 17th September 2011 raised KSh6 million. This year, the race saw cyclists cover a treacherous distance of 85kms. The race was won by David Kinjah who clocked in at a time of 2:31:00 followed by Anthony Mwite who clocked 2:34:00, and Farrell Ross at 2:34:02.

Standard Chartered Bank, the platinum sponsor gave KSh 3 million

while other key sponsors included Coca Cola, Safaricom, Kenya Pipeline Company, Geothermal Development who gave KSh1.2 million, KSh300,000, KSh500,000, and KSh200,000 respectively.

The annual event raises money for use in the rehabilitation of Lake Nakuru National Park's 74-km baboon-proof electric fence as well as support community projects in conservation. □

Source: [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke)

## New species of antelope discovered in West Africa

Scientists from the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, and a team of international researchers have discovered a new species of antelope that is found in Togo, Benin, and Nigeria.

The duiker is a very small antelope, measuring no more than

around 40 cm at the shoulder and weighing four to six kilograms. It belongs to the duiker subfamily of antelopes. The Afrikaans name, 'duiker', meaning 'diver', comes from the habit these timid animals have of diving into the vegetation at the slightest sign of danger. □

Source: [wildlifeextra.com](http://wildlifeextra.com)

## Snake and shrimp declared extinct

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that two species endemic to Florida, the South Florida rainbow snake and the Florida fairy shrimp, have been declared extinct. The finding came in response to a petition filed by the Center for Biological Diversity in 2010 seeking Endangered Species Act protection for the rainbow snake, fairy shrimp and more than 400 aquatic species in the south-eastern United States.

"It's heart-wrenching to learn that these two unique Florida species have been lost forever. Like most species that go extinct, these two were not protected under the Endangered Species Act, which is the most powerful tool we have for saving our nation's plants and animals from disappearing," said Tierra Curry, a conservation biologist with the Center.

The South Florida rainbow snake was known only from Fish Eating Creek, which flows into the west side of Lake Okeechobee. The beautiful snake was iridescent bluish-black with red stripes on its back and sides, red and yellow patches on its belly and throat, and a yellow chin. Adults were more than four feet long. It was last seen in 1952.

The Florida fairy shrimp was known from a single pond just south of Gainesville. The pond was destroyed by development, and the species hasn't been detected elsewhere. "The government has to determine quickly whether the 114 other Florida species it is reviewing will get protection so that more of Florida's heritage isn't erased by extinction," said Curry adding that the wellbeing of human society is deeply linked to the health of the natural systems needed to sustain life. "In the end, saving species will help save us." □

Source: [wildlifeextra.com](http://wildlifeextra.com)





## You are spoilt for choice this holiday season

Article by: **SAMMI NDERITU**

Kenya has been endowed with some of the most amazing wildlife parks and reserves in the world and for long has been regarded as the 'Home of African Safari' due to the unique adventure the country's various attractions offers including wildlife, mountain sceneries, sandy beaches and coral reefs, magnificent lakes and water springs, widespread savannah grasslands among many other features.

To increase tourists to national parks and reserves, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has taken a smart approach to make these places exciting and appealing to local and international tourists who not only want to watch wildlife, but also desire to engage in other pleasurable activities that will make a visit to any park and reserve memorable. This is the thinking behind the *'Twende Tujivinjari'* marketing campaign.

"We done our research into what Kenyans are watching, listening and their spending habits and patterns that is how the *'Twende Tujivinjari'* campaign was born because it means different things to different people," says Ian Mwathi, a Marketing Manager at KWS.

He says that for people who have grown up with wild animals asking them to tour parks and reserves to see wild animals will not work. Also, besides wildlife, parks and reserves have plenty to offer of which many people do not know and therefore *'Twende Tujivinjari'* has also been focusing on activity tourism within the parks.

Different parks and reserves will give you different exciting and adventurous experiences. To the bird watchers, you are spoilt for choice as you are most likely to spot an assortment of birds in all parks and reserves.

### Horse riding

As a visitor to Hells' Gate National Park, you can walk or choose to cycle without having the fear of being attacked by wild animals. Also at this park, you can do horse riding as you watch wild animals. This has been made possible by KWS through a partnership with other organisations to provide horses. Plans are also underway to introduce horse riding at Ol Donyo Sabuk National Park through a similar partnership.

Parks and reserves also provide nature trails. Nairobi's Safari walk and Kisumu Impala Sanctuary will offer you safari nature walk where you will get to walk on a constructed path while enjoying the wonders of nature. Kakamega forest and Saiwa Swamp National Park in Kitale, both beautiful and attractive places, you can have a leisurely walk while watching wildlife and plants at a closer range.

If your interest is to venture in caves, you can do this at Shimba Hills, Chyulu Hills, and Mount Elgon National Parks.

At Aberdare National Park, you can do fishing, visit the beautiful waterfalls, and walk through the moorlands where you will see buffaloes, the Mau Mau cave, and the Mugumo tree that the Mau Mau used as their post office as well as do mountain hiking.



Fish viewing can be done at Watamu. Mountain hiking at Mt. Kenya Park. and Malindi Marine Parks.



Vervet monkey at Kakamega Forest.



Rock climbing at Hell's Gate Park.

Mt. Kenya will give you a literally breathtaking experience as you do mountain hiking and rock climbing in its challenging peaks. You can walk through via ferrata, also known as the 'the road on the mountain.' Other activities include hiking and rock climbing. KWS has partnered with professional and experienced rock climbers who can guide you through the rocks. Tsavo East and Mt. Longonot are also potential places for rock climbing.

### Swim with dolphins

If your interest is to swim with the dolphin, then Kisite Mpunguti is the place to be. Other marine parks like Watamu and Malindi will also guarantee you an exciting snorkeling experience where you will enjoy a rich variety of coral reef and a vast array of tropical fish. In addition, these marine parks will offer you an assortment of water sports ranging from surfing to deep sea fishing. The parks have many glass bottomed boats and operators who can guide you.

From Masai Mara famous for its wildebeests migration, Lake Nakuru well known for its thousands of flamingoes and white and black rhinos, Nairobi which is Kenya's oldest national park, Mwea which has been described as an undiscovered oasis of tranquility to Arubuko Sokoke which boasts the largest remnant of the East African coastal forest. All these parks and reserves have unique experiences.

Others include Ndere Island on the shores of Lake Victoria which has been described as the island of serenity and beauty, Marsabit described as a bit of mars unexplored due to its magical lake paradise, Mount Marsabit which rises from the desert floor and peppered with extinct volcanic craters. There is also

Sibiloi National Park, also known as 'the cradle of mankind' due to its history of many remarkable hominids fossils finds. Located on the shores of Lake Turkana, the park hosts the world's largest Nile crocodile population, different types of fish and birds.

Mwathi notes; "One thing that we are trying to bring out is that 'Twende Tuijinjari' could mean one thing to you and another to somebody else. It could mean snorkeling to you who is a lover of water; it could mean mountain climbing to somebody who loves conquering the mountains and bird watching to lovers of birds. There are many kinds of things that we are trying to bring out through this campaign."

### Accommodation

To encourage many people to go to the parks and reserves, KWS has established several self catering accommodation and campsite areas to give people options to choose from. There are also hotels and lodges within most parks put up by investors.

"We offer different types of accommodation in our bandas, guest houses, and campsites that are comfortable, cost effective and some will offer you unique wildlife viewing at the comfort of your room or campsites since they have water holes nearby that attract animals," says Salome Gachago, Business Development Manager at KWS.

These guest houses and bandas are Kamboyo Guesthouse in Tsavo West, Allia Bay guesthouse in Sibiloi Park, Sable bandas in Shimba Hills, Sabuk House in Ol Donyo Sabuk Park, Oribi guesthouse in Ruma park, Koitoboss Guest House and Kapkuro bandas in Mt. Elgon Park, Malindi Bandas in Malindi Park, Sirimon Bandas

and Batian Guest House in Mt. Kenya, Murera and Kinna Bandas in Meru Park and Shimoni Bandas in Kisite Mpunguti Park and Reserve.

Others include Kilimanjaro Guest House in Amboseli, Naishi Guest House in Lake Nakuru, Fishing Lodge, Supper Hut and Tusk Camp in Aberdare Park.

For the guest houses and bandas, Gachago encourages visitors to book in advance. To have an experience in the park, plan and save in good time. "Our biggest failure is that we do not plan and actualise our plans and ideas to have holiday time which unlike people in the western countries who plan in advance and work towards actualising their desires. Many times people plan at the last minute and go to places like Mombasa public beaches and due to congestion there, they can never have a good time. Also due to the thought that touring parks and reserves is expensive, people totally fail to plan to have a holiday in them."

Gachago says when you get to parks and reserves you should not expect what you always find in your daily surrounding and thus you need to be alert and flexible. You are not guaranteed that you will always spot an animal of your choice but nonetheless, you should enjoy whatever you see. "If you don't spot an animal, you don't have to be disappointed as some of the animals are hard to spot. Furthermore, it is not many times you will encounter a lion chasing a gazelle hence expect to see or not see anything dramatic. Tone down on your expectation, create your own fun and have a good time." ▀

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