



**EWASO
LIONS**

2016 Annual Report



Jeremy Lucas

ABOUT LIONS

The African lion population has declined by 43% in the last 20 years and lions now occupy only 8% of their historical range in Africa*. The estimated numbers of lions across Africa are approximately 20,000. In Kenya, the national population now numbers less than 2,000 individuals. At current rates of decline, the species could become extinct here within the next two decades. This reduction in lion numbers is primarily due to habitat loss and conflict with humans, typically when lions kill people's livestock.

Lions and other large carnivores are wide-ranging species and designated protected areas are often not large enough to ensure their long-term survival. Therefore, it is crucial that conservation of these species, as well as their prey, is addressed throughout the landscape which not only incorporates protected areas but also the surrounding areas where local people live.

(*Beyond Cecil: Africa's Lions in Crisis Report Produced by Panthera, WildAid and WildCru, 2016)

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Shivani Bhalla
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jeneria Lekilelei
FIELD OPERATIONS & COMMUNITY MANAGER

Heather Gurd
CONSERVATION MANAGER

Tobias Otieno
RESEARCH MANAGER

Arzina Bhanjee
FINANCE MANAGER

Francis Lendorop
SECURITY MANAGER

OUR MISSION

Ewaso Lions is dedicated to conserving lions and other large carnivores by promoting co-existence between people and wildlife. We work hand-in-hand with local communities to provide education, training and improved conservation practices that help people and wildlife. We use sound science to help guide the long-term conservation of lions across community conservancies and protected areas in northern Kenya.

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Each and every day, I am thankful for the Ewaso Lions team that I live and work with. We have had quite a year! From the most exciting times where we've seen new signs of wildlife in the area or celebrated our successful community programmes, to our most devastating times when we've heard news of a lion's death — life here at Ewaso Lions is never dull.

As I hear the Mama Simba ladies speak up about conservation in their communities, or watch 13-year-old Junior tracking lions on his own initiative, or witness the passion and dedication the warriors show in all their tasks, or share each working moment with the most reliable, hard-working and dedicated management team I could ask for — I feel truly inspired to be part of this important work.

A personal highlight is that Nashipai, my favourite lioness, is still alive at the grand age of 16. Nashipai was the first lion I identified and got to know in 2002. She has successfully had cubs six times and has taught us everything we know about Samburu's lions. In her dotage, she often moves out of the protected areas and kills livestock, putting her at risk for retaliation from livestock herders. Our team has worked hard to ensure her safety and together with her experience, resilience and bravery... she seems unbreakable.

But, despite positive results, it has not been easy. With each passing year, new challenges and threats are thrown at us. Saving lions is getting harder and yet

the team perseveres and is relentless in its quest to promote co-existence. With the birth of each new lion cub, or the sighting of lions in areas they have never been before, change is happening and we are making a difference. Lions now feel safe in the community areas we work in because the Samburu people have accepted their presence. It is truly extraordinary.

Internationally and nationally our profile continues to grow with the formation of new partnerships and increased media coverage. We need to keep working on this wider message that lion conservation is not just our responsibility, but a global one.

2017 for me is a year of hope and optimism. We have so much to look forward to including celebrating Ewaso Lions' tenth anniversary in August. These ten years have flown by, and what was once a team of three is now a team of 40. But, we are not just a team — we are a strong, united and vigilant lion family.

None of this could be possible without you — our friends and supporters of Ewaso Lions. Your support enables us to keep going and allows us to continue our crucial work.

From me and the whole Ewaso Lions team — Ashe Oleng.

Shivani Bhalla
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tyrel Bernardini

Shivani & Kura



Rachel Kramer

Lentiyo



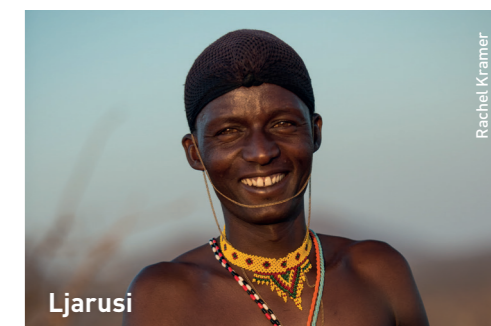
Tyrel Bernardini

Francis



Anthony Allport

Jeremiah



Rachel Kramer

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Ewaso Lions

Nape



Jillian Knox

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Julian Knox

TRANSFORMING HUMAN-LION CONFLICT

Our team works daily to reduce the frequency of human-lion conflict incidents and minimise negative consequences when they occur. This is how we are transforming conflict into co-existence.

EMPOWERING WARRIORS

Our Warrior Watch programme builds on Samburu warriors' traditional protection role by enhancing their ability to mitigate human-carnivore conflict throughout local communities. The Warriors serve as wildlife ambassadors and are the first responders to human-wildlife conflict. Trained in conflict transformation, they are skilled in calming tensions, demonstrating empathy for loss of livestock, and mitigating future problems. By the end of 2016, Warrior Watch included 18 warriors working across four conservancies spanning an area of 1690 km² (653 mi²).

PROFILE OF A WARRIOR

Yesalai Lemachokoti, Field Officer, who has worked with Ewaso Lions since 2011, monitors and saves lions, works with community members and attends to conflict incidents. Yet, this does not make his own livestock immune from predation. Yesalai lost eight goats to wild dogs in June - a huge loss for this young warrior. But, in spite of this, his resolve to protect carnivores is unwavering and only a day after losing his goats, he was back in the field tracking the same pack of wild dogs to ensure their safety. A positive, cheerful person, always saying "yes" to anything thrown at him (hence the name Yesalai), he risks his life and works round the clock to protect Samburu's lions and other carnivores. He truly epitomises the ethos of Warrior Watch.

"This year was very hard and more challenging than ever before. There was so much conflict throughout the year. The worst time for me was when we lost a lion I knew well to shooting. I am pleased to say that my team worked hard with determination and enthusiasm in difficult situations and I am also grateful for all the support we get from the Conservancies to ensure lions are kept safe".

Jeneria Lekilelei
FIELD OPERATIONS & COMMUNITY MANAGER



Rachel Kramer

"This year lions killed livestock 20 times in a conflict hotspot area called Loijuk. Having a base here really helped the community and the lions. We were able to get reports of lions and respond quickly as we were living in lion habitat".
Lmalasian Letoiye,
Warrior Watch Field Officer

PREVENTING CONFLICT

In 2016 our team's rapid response to hundreds of conflict incidents prevented retaliatory killings of lions 11 times — each time lions were being threatened. Four warriors were stationed at a temporary field base in an area experiencing intense human-wildlife conflict, engaging daily with community members to keep lions safe.

LIONS SHOT IN RETALIATION

Unfortunately, two lions were shot dead after they attacked livestock belonging to community members. Loiwotwa, a young male lion we had known for three years was killed in April, and in July we lost one of Naramat's young cubs after her mother killed a camel. Our field team worked closely with the Kenya Wildlife Service to follow-up on these killings — a real loss to Samburu's lion population. But the outrage expressed by the community at the loss of these lions demonstrated an increase in ownership over the lions in their areas.



Jeremy Lucas



Anthony Allport

PROMOTING CO-EXISTENCE BETWEEN LIONS AND PEOPLE

Our vision is to see people and lions co-existing in Kenya. We tailor conservation programmes for different demographics — including women, children, and warriors, as well as the tourism industry, thus meeting the needs of people and ultimately strengthening conservation.

LION KIDS CAMPS

Recognising that children are the future custodians of Kenya’s wildlife, Ewaso Lions launched the Lion Kids Camp programme in 2013. Our vision is to educate and inspire a new generation of conservation leaders through wildlife education, safaris and conservation-themed games and activities.

To date, we have run eight Lion Kids Camps with 213 Kenyan children attending them. In 2016 we held

three Lion Kids Camps and, for the first time, engaged an important new demographic — livestock herders.

Herders spend much of their time in wildlife areas and their daily activities impact wildlife — including where they graze their livestock, as well as their tolerance of, and interaction with wildlife. And yet, they have little or no conservation education. Engaging this vital group in our camps changes that and has an immediate and positive impact on wildlife.



Ewaso Lions

Within a week of our first herder’s Lion Kids Camp, we received news that Zawadi, a young herder from a neighbouring village, had been busy talking to her community about the importance of lions. When some older warriors visited her village she told them, *“Do not go after the lions and hurt them. If you do, you will have me to answer to”*. One warrior spoke back and said, *“Who are you to tell me what to do, Zawadi?”* to which she replied, *“I am the one who will teach you about lions”*.

Zawadi (left) is the daughter of our Mama Simba Coordinator, Mparasaroi (right) and she certainly looks set to follow in her mother’s footsteps as a fantastic ambassador and spokesperson for lions.

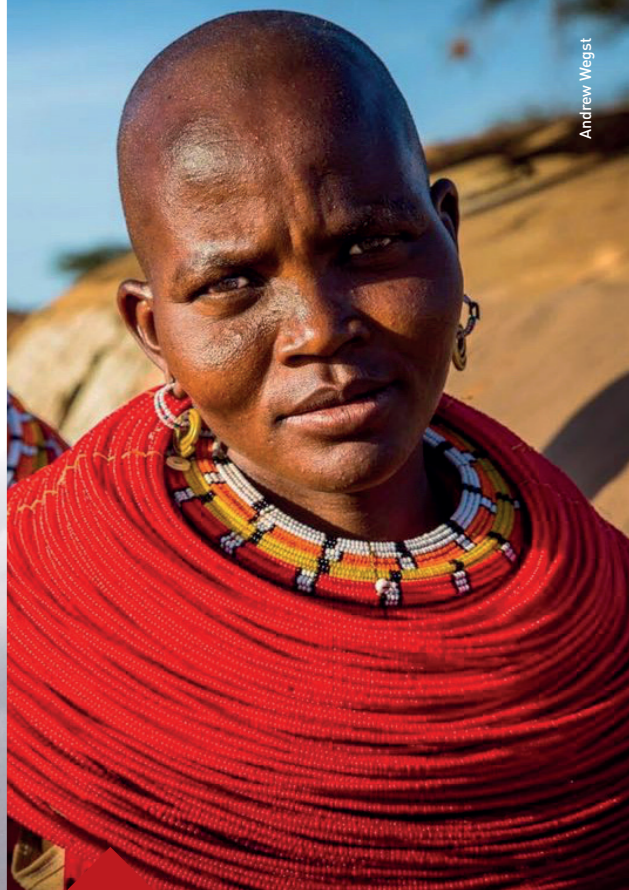
MAMA SIMBA

The Mama Simba, or “Mothers of Lions” programme continued to expand in 2016 under the guidance of newly appointed co-ordinators Munteli and Mparasaroi. The 19 Samburu women participate in conservation training and sustainable livelihood programmes — such as the production of our special beaded lion figurines, providing them with a supplementary source of income. They also report on lion sightings and conflict issues.

When once it was difficult for these women to protect lions, they now do so with great pride, bravery and a sense of ownership. Their passionate conservation message permeates throughout the communities they live in.



Ewaso Lions



Andrew Wegst

“I love lions like the way I love my livestock and will look after them and take any action if someone kills a lion even if it were my brother.”
Munteli Lalparasaroi -
Mama Simba Coordinator.

“This has been a busy year for our community programmes — from expanding our existing efforts to testing out new initiatives and engaging new demographic groups. Amongst my personal highlights has been the chance to work alongside Munteli and Mparasaroi, under whose leadership the Mama Simba programme continues to grow stronger. There is no stopping these women, who in 2013 were afraid to speak in public, but now work tirelessly to spread the conservation message, engaging with other women in their communities. They are an important voice in conservation.”

Heather Gurd
CONSERVATION MANAGER



Ewaso Lions

USING SCIENCE TO GUIDE CONSERVATION

We work towards securing key areas for lions in northern Kenya to maintain breeding populations and ensure connectivity within and beyond the Samburu landscape. The combination of research and community programmes is at the core of our work.

CONSERVATION OF LIONS ACROSS LANDSCAPES

Ewaso Lions tackles conservation throughout northern Kenya's landscape. Our study area has grown to 3,000 km² (1158 m²) and includes National Reserves and Community Conservancies in Samburu and Isiolo counties in northern Kenya. Within the ecosystem, we currently monitor approximately 50 lions, identifying individuals using their unique whisker spot patterns. In 2016, we recorded the birth of 13 cubs within the landscape.

SCOUTS ON PATROL AND DIGITISING DATA COLLECTION

Our Ewaso Lions Scouts bring an important research element to our conservation work. By monitoring long-term trends for lions and other wildlife populations, we can measure the progress of our work and design new activities to promote lion conservation. In 2016 data collected between 2011 and 2014 was analysed. There was a decline in both carnivore density and herbivore density from 2012 to 2014 with evidence that as livestock numbers increased, there was a concurrent decline in carnivores and herbivores. To improve the efficiency and accuracy of our data collection, our team of Scouts are now using the smartphone app, Cybertracker, and data management app SMART to record vital ecological information.

"I joined Ewaso Lions this year as the Research Manager and one thing I liked straight away is how dedicated and hard-working the team are. They spend every waking hour protecting the lions and promoting co-existence between people and carnivores. The warriors have a wealth of knowledge and experiences about wildlife which they are keen to share with me and I am excited to implement new data collection techniques to monitor wildlife and livestock."

Tobias Otieno
RESEARCH MANAGER



Tyrel Bernardini

MONITORING LIONS IN COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES

This year, our team followed two small prides daily in the Community Conservancies. Together with our partners at Lion Landscapes, we were able to deploy two high-tech GPS collars on Nadala and Naramat to closely monitor their movements. These lions, together with Napirai, are currently the only surviving females within the human-occupied landscape in our study area. The collar data provides vital insights into how the lions are moving through the Community Conservancies, which areas they feel safe in and also helps our field team alert herders of the lions' presence to avoid potential human-lion conflict. This is the second time in ten years that we have seen lions breed successfully in a community area — proving that co-existence between lions and people is possible.



Owen Bissell



Ewaso Lions

SAMBURU'S SURVIVOR

Jeneria describes our newest addition as a "young traveller and survivor". Born to Napirai, this young cub accompanied his mother for over 15 kilometres (nine miles) one night in June, walking through villages and livestock areas before settling in thick bush in the early hours of the morning. He is a tough little one! As evidenced by Napirai's care of her cub, solitary females who don't have the support of other females in a pride rarely leave their cubs alone in community areas, staying constantly by their side.

Anthony Allport



WARRIORS SAVE LIONS IN SAMBURU

Our Warrior Watch programme is proving hugely successful responding to conflict incidents quickly, stopping retaliatory killings 11 times and recording the birth of 13 lions cubs this year alone.

MAMA SIMBA - CREATING A PRIDE OF THEIR OWN

Our Mama Simba programme has grown to include women from three new villages, doubling our core group of ladies to 19. Their determination to grow and learn has resulted in their own "bush school" with literacy classes taking place four times a week.



Jillian Knox

LION KIDS CAMPS ENGAGE HERDERS

This year we held three Lion Kids Camps, engaged 78 livestock-herding children from Samburu, Isiolo and Laikipia Counties. The camps provided the herders with their first ever sightings of lions, and taught them the importance of protected areas and creating safe refuges for lions and other wildlife.



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ASSESSING SUITABLE LION HABITAT

We produced essential maps using data from the past six years to identify suitable lion habitat within Westgate Conservancy. This information will help with the creation of safe habitat and will enhance the work we do with the communities to promote co-existence with lions.

16-YEAR OLD NASHIPAI IS STILL ALIVE

Nashipai, Samburu's oldest lioness and the first lion we ever identified lives on! Living alone, often outside protected areas, Samburu's oldest lion is a true survivor and positive evidence that our long-term efforts in the landscape are working.



Ewaso Lions



Ann Martiens

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Ewaso Lions is an independent non-profit organisation and relies on donations and grants to run our programmes and operations.

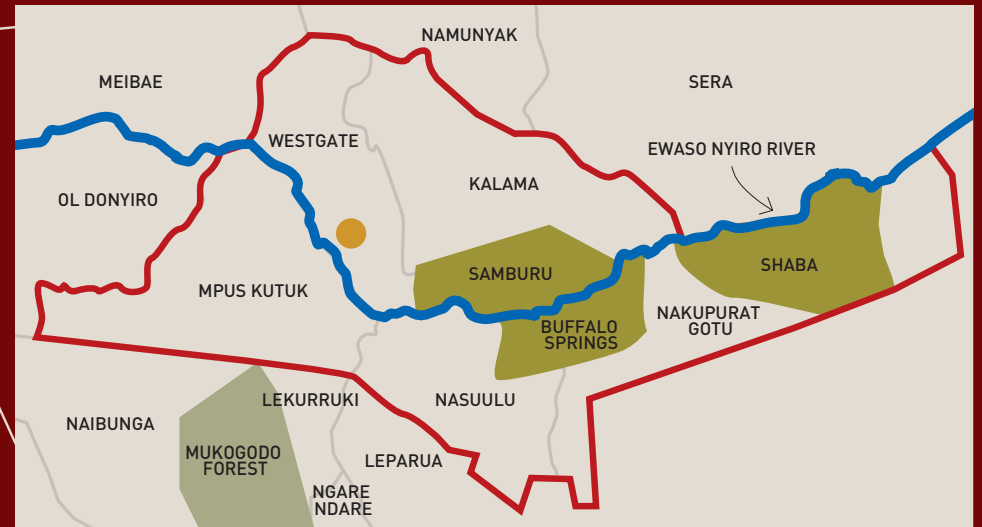
In 2016, 94% of the funds raised supported our Conservation and Research Programmes, 2% went to administration and 4% went to fund-raising.

We are so grateful to all the donors — individuals and organisations — who support Ewaso Lions.



EWASO LIONS STUDY AREA

- Ewaso Lions Camp ●
- Study Area ○
- National Reserves ●
- Forest ●
- Community Conservancies ○



Ewaso Lions

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