



EWASO
LIONS

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

EWASO LIONS IS DEDICATED TO CONSERVING LIONS AND OTHER LARGE CARNIVORES BY PROMOTING CO-EXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE.

Ewaso Lions is an independent 100% African wildlife conservation organisation which engages and builds the capacity of key demographic groups in the area (warriors, women, and children) to reduce human-carnivore conflict by developing strategies for preventing livestock predation. We raise awareness of ecological problems to spur solutions from within the communities, and conduct research and educational initiatives that reinforce traditionally held beliefs and the evolving culture of wildlife conservation across the landscape.



Cover photo: The lions in Samburu National Reserve have been spotted doing the most unusual things! Twice now, the team have watched the Koitogor pride hunting baboons. Though we knew it happened, we had never filmed lions chasing baboons up trees until now. Their prey appears to be diversifying as the rains fatten and strengthen other herbivores, perhaps making them harder to catch © Ewaso Lions

Above photo: Nanai and Lolotu in Buffalo Springs National Reserve © Ewaso Lions

ABOUT LIONS

The African lion population has disappeared from 92% of their historical range*. It is estimated that there are between 20,000 to 30,000 lions remaining across the continent - down from perhaps 200,000 lions a hundred years ago.

In Kenya, the national population now numbers less than 2,000 individuals although estimated numbers will be provided in 2020 following a National Large Carnivore Survey.

The reduction in lion numbers in Kenya is primarily due to habitat loss and conflict with humans, typically when lions kill people's livestock. More recent threats now include the development of large scale infrastructure projects, and climate change leading to loss of prey. 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.

*Stolton, S. and Dudley, N. 2019. The New Lion Economy. Unlocking the value of lions and their landscapes, Equilibrium Research, Bristol, UK.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dr Shivani Bhalla
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Resson Kantai Duff
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Jeneria Lekilelei
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

Tobias Otieno
RESEARCH MANAGER

Arzina Bhanjee
FINANCE MANAGER

Francis Lendorop
SECURITY MANAGER

LETTERS FROM DIRECTORS



Are we stranded in camp because of the floods? Will they kill the lions? Have we lost wild dogs to distemper and will the disease spread? Will the river dry up and communities struggle for water? How do we keep our project going - financially & physically? Is my team safe?

These are some of the questions that often keep me up at night - especially towards the end of 2019.

This year, our landscape's resilience has been tested to its limit, with our team constantly having to adapt to the changes. We responded quickly to a canine distemper outbreak. Our team remained for days in the field saving lions, as lion conflict escalated due to prolonged, heavy rains. I am especially proud this year of how we have continued to empower our team and watching them become the leaders they are. The ownership they have over Ewaso Lions, is what keeps me going. Thank you so much to all our friends and supporters - it is thanks to you that Ewaso Lions keeps going.

Dr Shivani Bhalla



Despite the constant winds of change, 2019 was our year of brave innovation.

From putting on our first university symposium on wildlife conservation, to launching a new literacy curriculum for Mama Simba ladies and Warriors, there were many moments that made me brim with pride. And just as the lions made brave journeys across the landscape, so too did our very own Mama Simba pioneers, travelling across the world to tell their story of lion conservation. These are the big innovations of the year, but what we don't talk about enough are the quiet efforts to keep everything going so we can innovate. Behind the scenes, Arzina and Evelyn worked tirelessly all year to dispatch money and supplies to ensure the team didn't miss a beat and our camp was fully functioning. In times of crisis, each person passed on a little hope and laughter to the next person. In the face of any storm, I take comfort in the fact that this incredible team has the courage to make the world a little wider and better for both people and wildlife.

Resson Kantai Duff



12 years ago I was just a young boy looking after my family's livestock in the bush - hating lions.

To me, lions were just the killers of my camels and cows. I could never imagine liking lions and I never imagined that the animals that caused me so much trouble were actually in trouble. It has been a long time since those early days. I know lions better than my cows now! And just like my cows, I know they just need space, food and safety. As I have understood lions, they have helped me understand people. The people who live alongside lions - my people - do not always want to be blamed for doing the wrong thing. They also need understanding, to be consulted, to be change makers, to be recognised. This is what the warriors I work with always wanted, and now they are leaders in conservation - their rightful place. They work hard every day to keep livestock safe, to inform other herders of lion presence, to remind people of our responsibility to our wildlife, and where necessary, to save lion's lives. I am so grateful to the Kenya Wildlife Service, all the community conservancies where we work and the reserves managements for all their support.

Jeneria Lekilelei

THE BEST OF 2019



0

LIONS KILLED AS A
RESULT OF CONFLICT

56

ADDITIONAL WOMEN
IN LITERACY SCHOOL

120

CHILDREN ATTEND 5
LION KIDS CAMPS IN 2019

250

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
ATTEND UNIVERSITY
WILDLIFE SYMPOSIUM

50

PARTICIPANTS ATTEND
COUNTIES WORKSHOP
ON RABIES & DISTEMPER

2,441

OF DIRECT SIGHTINGS
OF WILDLIFE BY OUR
SCOUTS & WARRIORS

11,230 KM

COVERED BY EWASO LIONS
VEHICLES IN NATIONAL
LARGE CARNIVORE SURVEY

320

DOMESTIC ANIMALS WERE
VACCINATED TO CONTROL DISEASE
SPREAD AMONGST WILDLIFE

5

NEW JEREMY LUCAS
EDUCATION FUND
SCHOLARS

THE EWASO LIONS

Naramat Returns

After taking residence in Il Ngwesi Conservancy for over a year, Naramat took the 106 kilometre trek back to Westgate Conservancy. But she did not come alone. Naramat brought with her three new cubs! The team were overjoyed at having her back with her new cubs, but even more elated with the community's reaction: they celebrated her reappearance, spoke about her at meetings and discussed safeguarding the Conservation Area for her. All this is proof of growing tolerance for lions.



© Ewaso Lions



Namunyak Hunts

Namunyak gave birth to 3 cubs in July this year, however, for many weeks she struggled to hunt and her cubs were getting weaker by the day. At the peak of the dry season in September, Namunyak was out hunting alone in Samburu at midday and came across a herd of Grevy's zebra who were coming down to the river to drink. She surprised them and focused on a young foal who she brought down within minutes. Her cubs were over 5 kilometres away and after she had a meal herself, she went and brought them to the kill, where they stayed for a few days. Thankfully the small family became stronger over time.

© Ewaso Lions

Ldarlei Named

People from all walks of life in northern Kenya continue to accept, and even revel in lion presence. We took the opportunity to invite local people, government officials, tour guides and rangers to name their lions in November. It sparked great discussions as people debated which local names best embodied the character of the lions many of them had seen and followed, reinforcing local ownership for years to come. During this Lion Naming Ceremony, 5 lions were named - including Ldarlei photographed here, meaning "light coloured" as a result of his mane!



© Ewaso Lions

Nanai Advances

Nanai lost one of her cubs in April this year after she was attacked severely by one of the male lions. Her remaining cub united with Namunyak's eldest cubs and soon after, Nanai started mating with both Lolotu and Ldarlei. We are hoping to see new cubs in early 2020!



© Julie Scardina

WARRIOR WATCH

For the first time in several years, we can report that not a single lion was killed in a retaliatory attack that our warriors responded to. Not one!

This marks a turning point for us, and a hope that in future, we will not measure success by the number of conflict incidents we attend to, but by how much tolerance we are building. While the world faces an attrition of culture, we are using our project to cement the cultural structures that keep tolerance for lions.

Our metrics this year reflect our hope:

19

WARRIORS TRAINED IN WILDLIFE MONITORING DATA COLLECTION

200

PARTICIPANTS ATTEND WORLD LION DAY IN NAISUNYAI VILLAGE LED BY OUR WARRIORS

2

COORDINATORS ATTEND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION WORKSHOP

71%

ATTENDANCE RATE OF OUR WARRIORS DURING 42 CLASSES HELD AT LITERACY SCHOOL

8

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS ATTENDED IN THE CONSERVANCIES

4224 km

COVERED ON FOOT BY OUR WARRIORS ON PATROL

10

LIONS VISIT WESTGATE CONSERVANCY IN ONE MONTH



MAMA SIMBA

It is safe to say that our Mama Simba coordinators Munteli and Mparasoroi had their most epic adventure in 2019: a tour of the United States of America!

These pioneers decided they wanted to tell their own stories and help with fundraising efforts that they've heard about year after year. From coast to coast and through three states and 6 cities, the ladies learnt more than they could have ever imagined.

They had never been in large aircrafts; they had not ever experienced (nor did they believe!) changing time zones. They don't have words to describe the marine life or some of the technology and infrastructure they experienced like giant bridges and electric cars. Everything was new and to be learnt. Most importantly, their confidence grew. They gave almost a dozen presentations in various venues, wowing audiences with their knowledge, unique world-view and ground-breaking achievements. They told their story. On a world stage at the Wildlife Conservation Network Expo, they spoke with unbelievable confidence and power about the challenges facing lions, and the work they are doing every day to secure a future for one of the world's most iconic animals.

"I am very happy that all my efforts to protect lions gave me a chance to go to America - to tell my story."

Mparasoroi Lemantaan, Mama Simba Coordinator





MILESTONES FOR LION KIDS CAMPS & JEREMY LUCAS EDUCATION FUND

At the insistence of the Samburu National Reserve Management, community leaders and other stakeholders, we held our first camp at a new location inside Samburu National Reserve.

The groundswell of support for our programme to be held at the site was extremely encouraging and has allowed us to hold 5 successful camps there, the highest number we have ever held in any year. The camps in 2019 brought in a total of 120 children. All were trained in animal husbandry techniques, carnivore track identification and were taken to the park for a safari, with almost all groups spotting lions and other large carnivores.

Evaluation results from one of the camps with herding children, showed that 42% of children considered themselves as responsible for conserving wildlife and other natural resources in their home area before the camp. Following the camp, this increased to 93%.

Meanwhile, the Jeremy Lucas Education Fund took on five new students this year - a record number for this budding fund. Junior, familiar to most as we have mentored him for many years, joined Jacob and Jonathan in schools in Maralal in Samburu. Our first student from a new conservancy, Samuel from Il Ngwesi has been settled in at Kirige boys in Meru while Hassan, our first Borana student took the longest journey of all, heading to the prestigious national school, Maseno, in Kisumu.



“I am excited to have passed my exams because of hard work! I am now interning at Ewaso Lions, and am helping in teaching the Mama Simba ladies. I have made an application to join university in September. One day, I will be a science teacher. My future is bright. Thank you for all the help and support.” Eunice Lekuiye

NEW APPROACHES

They could write their names. They could go to a bank and open an account. They could vote. But classes at the Warrior Watch school and the Mama Simba school every week were getting a bit boring. A little abstract.

They were learning lots of English words they wouldn't really use. Classes were growing quiet as there was little discussion about real world topics.

Ewaso Lions teamed up with the Africa Educational Trust to launch a new curriculum, giving the women and warriors' classes new life. It all started with a Training of Trainers, which has equipped 15 odd members of the Ewaso Lions team to conduct the lessons, and then we brought in the eager students. We could not have anticipated what came next. In the Ngare Mara area and Il Ngwesi Conservancy, the respective coordinators who were trained then initiated their own classes, drawing 56 new learners in total. We are so excited that a whole new group also get to learn about conservation while getting literacy.

UNIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM - A NEW DEMOGRAPHIC

Ewaso Lions held its first ever Wildlife Conservation Symposium at the University of Nairobi in September.

Our mission to promote co-existence has spread its wings this year, reaching out to future captains of industry across the country to ensure conservation remains on the national agenda as we develop. The event attracted over 250 students from over 10 universities who are passionate about wildlife and wanted to hear speakers expound on everything from community conservation, nuances in conservation, infrastructure and biodiversity to seedballs. The event drew students studying architecture, construction management, mathematics, quantity survey; a resounding success in terms of our mission to have a multi-disciplinary discussion about conservation, with everyone playing their part.



KURA'S PRIDE

It is little noticed that Ewaso Lions mission centres around not only lions but other large carnivores. We have to adapt to the challenges facing hyaenas, leopards, wild dogs and the like, and these now include the threat of disease which is often transmitted through domestic dogs.

In early October, our field team located a very sick wild dog (also known as painted dogs in southern Africa) in Samburu. Vets from the Kenya Wildlife Service followed up quickly and it was confirmed that the wild dog had canine distemper. Over the course of a week, we sadly confirmed 5 dead wild dogs, a huge tally for these critically endangered animals.

Upon recommendation from the Samburu County Vet department and the Kenya Wildlife Service, we rallied together with partners to vaccinate domestic dogs across 6 villages to contain the spread of the disease. We purchased rabies and distemper vaccines, mobilised vets, and informed all community members about the vaccination programme. Vets arrived and in 2 days, we were able to vaccinate 320 dogs, cats and donkeys.

Since then, 14 wild dogs were sighted - giving us hope that the rest of the pack were not infected and will pull through.

Off the back of this, Ewaso Lions has seen fit to launch a new programme to address the challenges communities and domestic dogs face in the Samburu landscape. The programme known as Kura's Pride (named after Ewaso Lions' famous first dog Kura), will hopefully lead to healthier dogs and could lead to less human-carnivore conflict, reduced disease transmission to wild carnivores and an overall healthier balance between people, livestock, wildlife and the environment.

“Kura and Nanyori are two of the luckiest dogs in Samburu, however sadly not all dogs are valued and taken care of. Through Kura's Pride, we will be able to improve the lives of thousands of dogs in Samburu and Isiolo, ultimately helping communities better deal with potential conflict, and helping wildlife through reduced disease transmission. It is a win-win for everyone.”

Dr Shivani Bhalla



1. Frieda, one of the vets, vaccinates young puppy © Ewaso Lions.
 2. Vanessa, one of the vets, prepares vaccine © Ewaso Lions.
 3. 'Champion' arrives on motorbike for vaccination © Ewaso Lions.
 4. Young herder brings his dog for vaccination © Ewaso Lions.



COLLABORATIONS IN CONSERVATION

Lions, Grevy's zebras and other wildlife in northern Kenya are due to face unprecedented impacts of linear infrastructure due to the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor, which will cut across the region over the next decade. There is a critical window of opportunity to mainstream ecological sustainability into LAPSSET upfront such that Kenya is held up as a global example of best practice, and Ewaso Lions have partnered with the Grevy's Zebra Trust to take up this challenge. There is much to celebrate for the Ewaso Lions' and Grevy's Zebra Trust's joint Biodiversity and Infrastructure Programme.



REROUTING:

Due to inputs provided on the design of the proposed Lokichar-Lamu Crude Oil Pipeline development and building relationships across the infrastructure-conservation divide, a section of the pipeline will now be rerouted around a critically important dry season area for Grevy's zebra lactating females.



BUILDING BRIDGES:

Our team attended the African Conference for Linear Infrastructure and Ecology in South Africa where we sponsored senior officials from key infrastructure agencies to attend, cementing relationships as we learnt new ways of integrating green and grey infrastructure.



HIGHWAY DESIGN ADVICE:

Together with landscape partners for the proposed Isiolo-Lokichar Highway, we provided a detailed report addressing critical crossing points for wildlife and how to secure them. In addition, we provided inputs on two regional development plans, and one proposed road.



TEAM SHINES AT GLOBAL CONFERENCE:

The International Conference on Ecology and Transportation in the U.S focused on a number of information dissemination activities at a landscape level, providing information and training on infrastructure and biodiversity.



WILDLIFE WATCH PROJECT LAUNCHED:

The project aims to monitor the impacts of an existing highway from Isiolo to Marsabit, with the ultimate goal being to provide data to inform retrofitting of this highway to secure the safety of road users, wildlife and domestic animals.

UP IN LIGHTS



JENERIA MEETS PRINCE WILLIAM AT THE TUSK AWARDS:

In November, Jeneria's story was brought to the big screen at the Empire Cinema in Leicester Square London as, together with other amazing African conservationists, he was celebrated during the Tusk Awards for Conservation.

"If we lose lions within our homeland, we are losing part of our life."

Jeneria Lekilelei

LEMARTI MUSIC:

Samburu's biggest music star Lemarti, teamed up with Ewaso Lions, Save the Elephants and the Grevy's Zebra Trust in December to launch a brand new wildlife hit - "Oro Ei", calling all people to look after wildlife with the same care pastoralists look after their livestock.



LEMARTI LEMAR

"If we can teach people about wildlife, we can protect our future."

December 2019 | 15:00 EAT



MUNTELI RECEIVES AWARD FROM THE WOMEN'S WORLD SUMMIT FOUNDATION:

Mama Simba Coordinator Munteli was a recipient of the Women's World Summit Foundation Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life. In the award, Munteli's application was touted as "one of the most original applications" written in their 26 years of operation!



JENERIA FEATURED ON CITIZEN TV:

On the small screen, Warrior Watch was featured on Kenya's largest TV station on the programme Wildlife Warriors!



This Sunday on WILDLIFE WARRIORS learn about lions with Jeneria Lekilelei from Ewaso Lions on Citizen TV Kenya from 4:30pm



A MOMENT ON A WORLD STAGE:

The Mama Simba Coordinators, flanked by Jeneria and Resson had an unprecedented reception at the Wildlife Conservation Network as the four of them took to the stage to tell their stories of successful lion conservation in Kenya.



LIFE AT EWASO LIONS

“What is a day in the life of the people of Ewaso Lions?” they ask. The answer is always “No day is the same!” Every day is busy with some of us in the field, whilst others are in front of laptops. There is never a dull moment in our lives and we hope you enjoy this selection of photos of what our lives are like!



1. Jeremiah and Francis out on foot patrol, 2. Evanson analyses data at his desk, 3. Munteli goes out on vehicle patrol, 4. Munteli teaches at Mama Simba school, 5. Team scans for wildlife in Conservation Area, 6. Lkasia calls the dogs for their dinner, 7. Jeremiah observes lion tracks, 8. Team crosses the river in search of lions. All photos © Jacques van der Westhuizen

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT – ASHE OLENG

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

In 2019, 95% of the funds raised supported our conservation and research programmes, 3% went to administration and 2% went to fundraising.

Thank you so much to all our partners who enable us to make a conservation impact in Kenya:

KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE

SAMBURU, ISIOLO AND LAIKIPIA COUNTY
GOVERNMENTS

SAMBURU, BUFFALO SPRINGS AND SHABA
NATIONAL RESERVES MANagements

COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES (WESTGATE,
KALAMA, NASUULU, NAKUPRAT-GOTU,
OL DONYIRO, MEIBAE, LEPARUA, IL NGWESI,
LEKURUKKI, NAMUNYAK)

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION NETWORK

GREVY'S ZEBRA TRUST

SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

ACTION FOR CHEETAHS

DAKTARI WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

PRIDE LION CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

AFRICA EDUCATIONAL TRUST

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST

LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY

MALIASILI

KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

WILDLIFEDIRECT

THE SAFARI COLLECTION

ALL EWASO FORUM MEMBERS

UVUMBUZI AFRICA

EWASO LIONS CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

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





Ewaso Lions





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