



Ewaso Lions Quarterly Update January - March 2015

Wildlife Monitoring & Research – Lion Update



Our **lion monitoring activities** have continued over the last three months; the field team out patrolling on foot and by vehicle each day. During this time, we have observed some **changes in lion movement**; some lions having moved outside the boundaries of the National Reserves and into community areas.

Naramat, a 7-year old pregnant female, and Lentim, her 2-year old son have recently taken up residence within Westgate Community Conservancy. Initially, the pair spent some weeks at the boundary between Westgate and Kalama Conservancies, where they killed numerous livestock. They have since moved to, and largely remain within, the Core Conservation Area of Westgate Conservancy and we believe, as Naramat is approaching the end of her pregnancy, she is looking for a safe place to give birth. This highlights the importance of the Core Area as a safe refuge for lions and other wildlife. Despite being fairly small sized – only 9km² – carnivores recognize this as a safe area and if sufficient prey is available, lions and other carnivores will inhabit this area. Because people and livestock are not supposed to enter the area, this can reduce conflict with local people, which is exactly what Ewaso Lions is striving to achieve through our work. Importantly, lions have also been heard roaring, at night, whilst in community areas; an indicator that they may feel safe away from the relative protection of National Reserves. As Naramat nears the end of her pregnancy, we continue to monitor the pair closely and communicate with Conservancy Rangers, Guides and the local community to ensure human activity is minimized within the immediate vicinity. Jeneria, Ewaso Lions Field Operations and Community Manager, has held meetings with Westgate Conservancy staff and local Tour Guides to update them on the situation and discuss appropriate behavior when driving close to the lions. We have also been encouraged by the local communities interest in and tolerance towards the lions and will work to ensure this is maintained.

Nashipai, one of the Ewaso Lions best known females, has finally been seen after disappearing for months. The 13-year old lioness, normally a resident within the National Reserve, disappeared for several months (in 2014) along with her three 2 year old cubs; Naipirai, Loiwoywa and Lboilei. We feared she may have died or been cut off from returning to the Reserve. However, six months later Nashipai returned alone. We believe her three cubs must have split up in Kalama Conservancy; typical behaviour at this age. Napirai, the only female cub, returned to join her mother in the Reserve recently. Whilst one of the young males, Lboilei, has not been sighted since, his brother Loiwoywa remained within Kalama Conservancy and continues to move between Kalama, Westgate and Samburu.

Warrior Watch Update



Ewaso Lions founded Warrior Watch with Westgate Community Conservancy in early 2010. Warrior Watch is a **unique conservation programme in Samburu that engages morans in active wildlife conservation**. Through Warrior Watch, warriors report on wildlife sightings and issues such as conflict in exchange for educational lessons and a food stipend. Warriors are trained on data collection, basic wildlife ecology, conservation and security issues, and the economic value of wildlife through tourism.

Following an earlier evaluation of the programme, Ewaso Lions expanded Warrior Watch in January 2015; recruiting four new warriors from outside Westgate Community Conservancy. Three warriors were recruited from Nasuulu Conservancy: Lemasian is working in the Ngare Ndare area, Lesiamito is working in the Loruko area and Lekoyo is working in the Lolwa Longisho area. To date, one warrior, Lekinyal, has also been recruited in Kalama Conservancy and, until additional warriors are identified, he has been largely mobile; holding meetings with community members, attending any conflict incidents and

monitoring the movement of lions in the local area. Our intention is, however, to recruit additional warriors from within Kalama Conservancy over coming months. We also intend to recruit further warriors within Mpus Kutuk Conservancy, where we have had one warrior, Lekapana, based since June 2014. The total number of warriors in Warrior Watch is currently 16.

Youth Development Update



Ewaso Lions understands the value and opportunity in educating tomorrow's leaders and continues to provide direct support to schools and students. We are pleased to report that, in 2015, we have been able to provide two additional students with **school scholarships**. The scholarships will enable these students to attend a reputable secondary school, with tuition fees covered for the 4 full academic years. This year's recipients are: France Ekidam is a 19 year old student who attended Lpus Leluai Primary School in Westgate Community Conservancy and Mellarny Mayo Keete is a 12 year old student who attended Ngare Mara Primary School in Nakuprat-Gotu Community Conservancy. Neither France nor Mellarny's families would otherwise have had the capacity to support their children through secondary school. With the

addition of France and Mellarny, Ewaso Lions currently provides school scholarships for 6 secondary school students (4 girls & 2 boys) and, under Ewaso Lions sponsorship, one of our former scholarship students is now attending Art College in Nairobi where he is showing great promise as a talented artist.

Following the recruitment of Ewaso Lion's **Education Officer** in September 2014, we are currently finalizing preparations for the next **Lion Kids Camp** to be held in April 2015 and have started to work on the strategy for a new **Education Programme** which we hope to implement in the latter half of 2015.

Drought Update



Following the lack of significant November rains in 2014, Westgate Community Conservancy and the surrounding landscape has become extremely dry. As a result of the **drought**, people are frequently encroaching into the National Reserves to graze their livestock. Whilst carnivores typically thrive under drought conditions, livestock encroachment puts lions at risk even within the boundaries of the protected areas and some have subsequently moved into neighbouring community areas. During this time, we are working closely with the local community to minimize potential conflict.

With the Ewaso Nyiro river having completely dried up, on 15th March 2015 Ewaso Lions staff gathered along with representatives from our Mama Simba and Warrior Watch community programmes and several Westgate Conservancy Rangers to dig a series of **waterholes** for wildlife and the local community. Fortunately some rain arrived on the 22nd of March and the river flowed on the 23rd.

About Ewaso Lions

Ewaso Lions is an independent non-profit wildlife conservation organisation in northern Kenya. Our mission is to conserve Kenya's lions and other large carnivores by promoting coexistence between people and wildlife. Since 2007, Ewaso Lions has used sound science, education, and capacity building to foster support for and guide the long-term conservation of lions. For more information on our community and research programmes, please visit www.ewasolions.org

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