



Main Highlight: Braving the Drought Together

The Greater Horn of Africa is plunging into a 5th consecutive failed rainy season. After IGAD'S Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) declared that the October to December 2022 would likely fail, Ewaso Lions banded together with partners to assist our communities and wildlife. While we have had some rain in our landscape over the past few weeks, we have collectively shored our defenses against the drought in several ways:

- **Digging for water:** The Ewaso Nyiro River, our region's lifeblood has dried up several times this year, necessitating digging operations together with our partners. Our Mama Simba ladies led these efforts on the Ewaso Lions' side. The water in the riverbed has helped sustain livestock, wildlife and people alike.
- **Food relief for communities:** Ewaso Lions also teamed up with well-wishers and partners to provide much-needed food to villages and schools. The situation has been extremely dire, with malnutrition in both adults and children being felt across the areas we work. 1700 families received maize and beans through our joint efforts with Westgate Conservancy.
- **Assisting partners with herbivore supplementary feeding:** We worked to support the Grevy's Zebra Trust (GZT) to provide hay to Grevy's zebra, the most critically endangered zebra on earth. This species has suffered profusely in this drought season, and our team was happy to help the GZT team with hay provisioning and transport for the vet who was working to keep weak individuals alive.

Ewaso Lions is grateful to local conservation partners, conservancy managements, reserve management teams, KWS and the Wildlife Conservation Network, with whom we have worked as we brave the crisis together.



Women dig for water in the Ewaso Nyiro River bed; Food relief deliveries arrive in Samburu; Women walk home with bags of food

Lion News

Over the past 3 months, we have been keeping a very close eye on **Nanai** after we saw that she has lost many of her teeth (due to old age) and was also involved in a fight. Her gums were swollen and we are so grateful to the Kenya Wildlife Service veterinarian Dr. Gathoni who assessed her situation and encouraged us to monitor her frequently. We are relieved to report that although Nanai's mouth still looks quite bad, it has vastly improved and she is hunting daily. Letupukwa and Jeremiah have been watching her and reported that Nanai successfully hunted and fed on a waterbuck as well as warthogs on a few occasions. She is doing a remarkable job raising her

three 1-year old cubs and is in the company of the rest of the pride who provide her with much support. We are so grateful to everyone for their reports and concern about Nanai - the guides, rangers, and tourists in Samburu and Buffalo Springs National Reserves who have reported her sightings often.

Meanwhile, we are thrilled to report that in our 15th year of operations, Ewaso Lions hit the **highest number of lions monitored** since our records began. With small prides and solitary individuals being monitored all over the landscape, 7 cubs born this year, and increasing tolerance for lions by the people who live alongside them, 2022 saw a steady increase in the population. To get a tangible sense of this heartening news, we wrote about some of the lions and other carnivores thriving across the landscape in [our blog here](#).

This quarter also saw **3 non-resident males make a few brief entries into Samburu** from Il Ngwesi. After just a short period, they headed back south to Il Ngwesi Conservancy and are now being watched over by our team there. Their presence in Samburu led to new movement by our resident males who ventured far east and west into areas we had not seen them in before.

We thank the reserve and conservancy managements for their hard work in safeguarding the space for these lions.



Nanai's cubs play in Samburu National Reserve; Nanai pictured with her swollen mouth; New males from Il Ngwesi rest in the saltbush

Key Highlights from this Quarter

- **Lion Kids Camps:** with the school term drawing to a close, Lion Kids Camps resumed late in the quarter. The team held 4 camps back-to-back, hosting 96 children from 4 conservancies. With the landscape having had its first rains in a long time, the children were treated to beautifully lush landscapes and managed to get some of their first-ever lion sightings from the Lion Kids Camp bus. We thank Nasuulu, Nakupurat-Gotu, Kalama and Westgate Conservancies for their support in these recent camps and the management of Samburu National Reserve.
- **Mobile Vet Unit, one year on:** In October, the team celebrated one year since the launch of the Domestic Animal Mobile Veterinary Unit. The Community Animal Health Initiative which is a partnership programme has accomplished some important results in that time:
 - A total of **370 dogs and cats** were vaccinated during the period from October 2021-September 2022. Out of this 91.4% were dogs and 8.6% were cats. The dogs were vaccinated against Rabies and Canine Distemper while the cats against Rabies and Cat flu.
 - Dog Population Control: **104 dogs and cats** received population control services. Nine additional dogs underwent population control procedures as part of Transmissible Venereal Tumor management.

- **111** animals were also treated as **emergency cases**. The animals included 79 camels, 17 dogs, 7 donkeys, 6 goats, 1 cow, and 1 sheep.
- **Team visit Namunyak Conservancy:** Jeneria, Toby and the lion monitoring team trekked through the Matthew Range in September in an epic journey to track down collared lion Sarara whose collar had malfunctioned. While the efforts did not bear fruit in terms of finding her, the team was able to properly survey the forested and mountainous lion habitat and the challenges they and the people who live alongside them are facing. We thank Namunyak Conservancy, KWS Wamba and Sarara for their hospitality during this climb up the mountains.
- **Mama Simba meeting:** In September and November, Mama Simba ladies gathered to take stock of how their work was evolving, and decide how to re-weight various programmes and activities. They have articulated their mission as preserving culture, empowering women, and improving livelihoods through conservation. They now hold firmly to the historically held belief that wildlife belongs to women. Look out for the Mama Simba ladies as partnership is now one of their core values and they will be initiating and participating in various activities across the Westgate Conservancy in the coming months.
- **Dr. Jessicah nominated:** This quarter, Dr. Jessicah Kurere was shortlisted for the Veterinary Clinic Award by the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. Running a domestic animal veterinary unit is a novel project, both as a means to conserving wild carnivores and improving health within our landscape, and the impacts for multiple species of animals, and tolerance towards wildlife gained Jess and her team the recognition they deserved this year. We thank all of you who voted and worked to amplify the teams' efforts.
- **Toby and Shivani in the U.S.:** Shivani Bhalla returned to the live stage at after many years of virtual presentations. She was accompanied by Ewaso Lions Director of Impact and Operations, Toby Otieno, making his debut on a world stage. Taking an in-depth look at the Ewaso Lions programmes, Shivani and Toby spoke about their conservation journeys, and what community-led conservation truly means. Watch their [presentation here](#).
- **Kura's Pride on Instagram:** Kura's Pride stories have been a source of inspiration in challenging times. We have used various ways to document the sweet and resilient domestic animals in the landscape that have received care from our team, including through [this blog](#) giving a window into the world of Kura's Pride. This quarter, we took it a step further and put Kura's Pride on Instagram. Please feel free to follow us and enjoy the daily highs and lows of this incredible team.

Team Trainings

- **Invasive species training:** Partners across 5 Community Conservancies (Westgate, Kalama, Meibae, Nanapisho and Naapu) came together for a training workshop on how best to manage "*mathenge*" - *Prosopis juliflora* - an invasive alien tree (native to Mexico, central and northern South America) that has become a new threat to wildlife and communities in this part of northern Kenya. Trained by Sarah Chiles (Landscape Infrastructure Advisor for Ewaso Lions and Grevy's Zebra Trust), everyone learned about the devastating impact of this invasive species that invades healthy grasslands and can reduce grass cover down to 2%, how each tree can consume up to 36 litres of water (a huge amount where water scarcity is a problem), and how damaging it is to livestock which lose their teeth after feeding on its sugar-rich pods

and eventually die. *Mathenge* also becomes a breeding zone for mosquitos - a great concern for the area. Our team has discovered that lions are now using *mathenge* as their preferred habitat due to their ability to hide in this very thick bush. The challenge though is with the lack of grass, lions are struggling to find enough prey in the mathenge areas. They often move larger distances in unsafe areas in search of prey. Fortunately, there are some rapid response measures (thanks to the Woody Weeds Programme) that we are able to use collectively to manage *mathenge*. One such measure is the use of Tree Poppers to pull out small emerging mathenge bushes. Our team has already begun piloting the use of these devices for tree removal in Westgate Conservancy. With collaboration and sharing and exchange of information, we hope that we can all make a difference in managing the spread of *mathenge*. We thank Westgate Conservancy and Regional Coordinators from other conservancies for taking the lead in this following the training.

- **Matthew at SMART training in Machakos:** In September 2022, Matthew attended a five-day regional Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) at Maanzoni Lodge, Machakos County. SMART is a conservation technology platform developed in 2011 with different analysis tools that assist conservation managers in collecting and analyzing data to make sound management approaches in protected areas. The training was attended by 40 participants across Africa and the main objective was to train intermediate users to advanced users. The training involved introducing the newly released SMART 7 with more features including uploading data and updating patrol packages remotely. As a result, Matthew developed skills to better collect data and analyse using the new features and utilise them for better management approaches.
- **John, Solomon, and Matthew at EarthRanger:** Solomon Lenasalia, John Galhaile and Matthew Muruana attended the 2022 EarthRanger User Conference (ERUC22) at Naivasha, Nakuru County. EarthRanger is a software that helps ecologists, wildlife biologists and protected areas managers in making more informed decisions through real-time monitoring of wildlife and operations. During the conference, our team was able to attend different sessions on EarthRanger Mobile and Tableau trainings which are important for data collection and analysis. The team saw the importance of integrating community in conservation discussions which would further assist us in achieving our objectives. Additionally, they attended sessions on wildlife movement across conservation areas which is key in mapping out wildlife and identifying key wildlife corridors. Solomon, soon to be a veterinary student, attended a session on wildlife health and EarthRanger, to interact more with veterinary and ecologists in these fields. Additionally, the team had an interest in integrating SMART with EarthRanger since we are already using SMART for data collection and analysis. We are grateful for the support of the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance for their support in this.
- **Photography Training:** We thank Jane Wynyard from Save the Elephants for training our team on photography skills and ensuring our cameras are in great working condition with the right settings. Our team is looking forward to future trainings with Jane when out with lions.

Special Highlight: Ewaso Lions around the World

In the past few months, the team has had the opportunity to visit various countries and participate in or train a plethora of groups. **Jeneria and Nanapisho Manager Ben Lejale visited the Niassa Carnivore Project (NCP) in Mozambique in September.** They were both given the opportunity to speak about their work, the challenges, and similarities with NCP.

In August, **Mama Simba Coordinator Munteli** took her second trip to the US, accompanied by Resson. She visited several states and gave talks in Santa Fe, San Diego, and L.A. about her work with women and lion conservation.

In October, **Toby** attended the **Geo for Good Summit in Palo Alto, California**. The annual conference centres around leveraging technology and use of mapping tools (such as Google Earth, Earth Engine, Environmental Insights Explorer, and My Maps) for positive impacts worldwide.

In November, **Shivani** as a **Whitley award winner** attended a **5-day workshop in Kashka Suu village, Kyrgyzstan**. She was part of a core group of conservationists and was trained on the Partners Principles toolkit for conservation practitioners around the world. The group, hailing 22 countries working across 5 continents and oceans, announced the creation of the Partners Conservation Alliance to improve how biodiversity conservation is practiced worldwide.



Jeneria speaks to the Niassa Carnivore Project Team; Munteli poses with statue of Martin Luther King Jr. in Olympia, Washington

Special Appreciation: Thank you so much to all our partners who enable us to make a conservation impact in Kenya including; Kenya Wildlife Service; Samburu, and Isiolo County Governments; Samburu, Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves Managements; Community Conservancies (Westgate, Kalama, Nasuulu, Nakuprat-Gotu, Naapo, Nanapisho, Meibae, Leparua, Il Ngwesi, Lekurukki, and Namunyak).

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