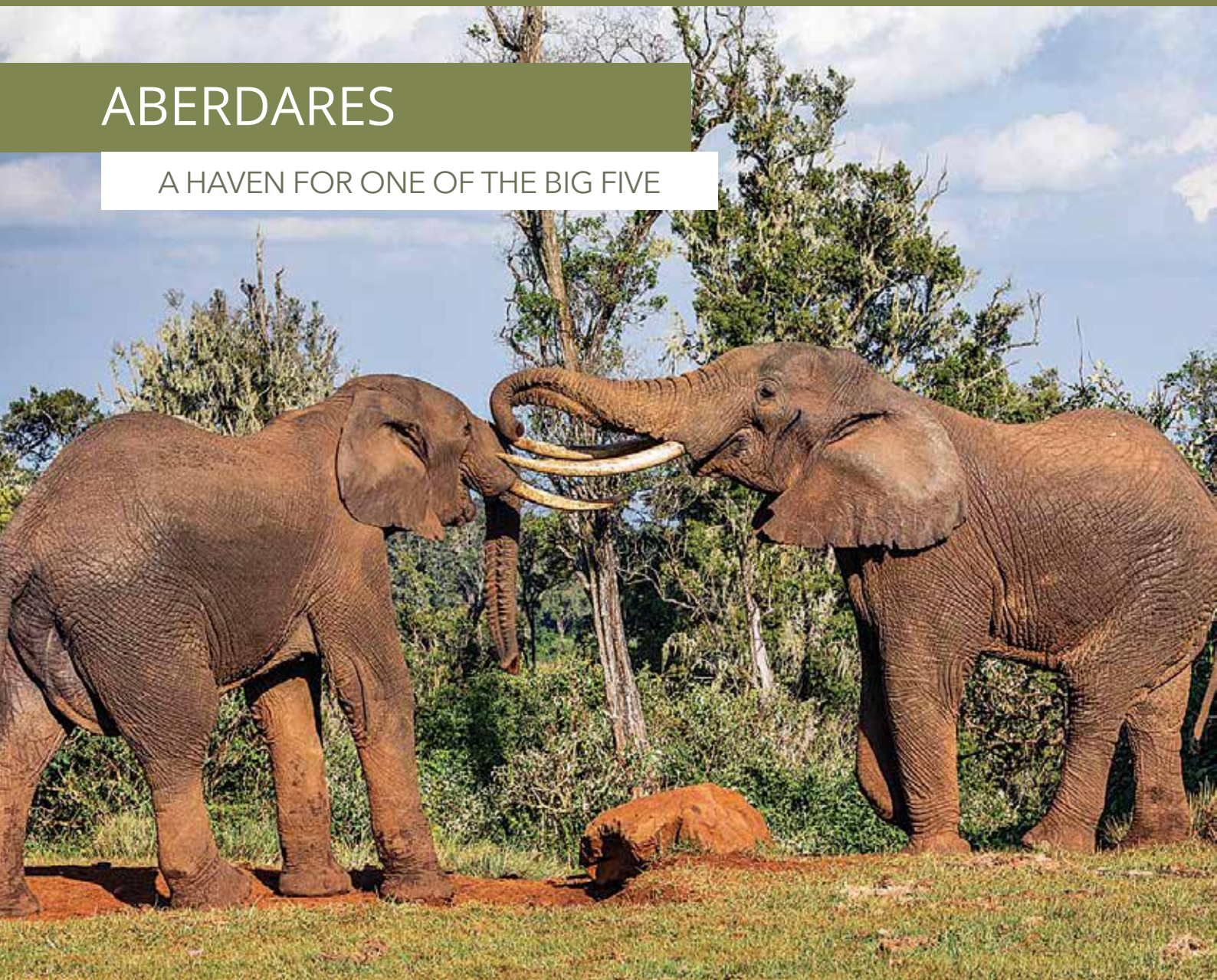


# ARK*ive*

## ABERDARES

A HAVEN FOR ONE OF THE BIG FIVE



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THE EBURU - LAKE  
NAIVASHA WILDLIFE  
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HANDING OVER OF  
KITHOKA ANIMAL  
GRID SITE TO THE  
CONTRACTOR



HUMANS IN HARMONY WITH HABITAT & WILDLIFE





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Cover picture by Nigel Pavit

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• Friends of Rhino Ark



**Photography by:**  
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Peter Munene, Donna Sheppard,  
Alfonse Kiprono

## RHINO ARK OBJECTIVES

Rhino Ark seeks solutions to the challenges facing the mountain forest ecosystems of Kenya, also known as the water towers. More specifically, Rhino Ark aims to:

- (i) Protect Kenya's mountain forests, other threatened habitats and their rich biodiversity;
- (ii) Engage and educate adjacent communities in conservation;
- (iii) Secure the connectivity between mountain forests and other threatened wildlife habitats;
- (iv) Establish sustainable financing mechanisms for the conservation of mountain forests and other threatened wildlife habitats;
- (v) Advocate nationally and internationally for the conservation of the mountain forests and other threatened habitats, their wildlife and their ecological functions; and,
- (vi) Use science to assess the impacts of, and review conservation interventions.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VIEW

CHRISTIAN LAMBRECHTS

Over the past year, in a socio-economic environment defined by the pandemic, we have learned much about ways to increase our resilience. We have reprogrammed our conservation portfolio with a focus on core activities, explored and tapped new funding opportunities, and adjusted our operations to meet health protocol requirements and reduce costs. Thus, despite the myriad of challenges we faced and the sacrifices we had to make, it has been a year of positive changes in the way we operate. The changes have yielded many positive conservation outcomes.

In addition to the continuous maintenance of our legacy projects, in particular the completed electric fences in Aberdares and Eburu, and the electric fence in Mt. Kenya already half-way built, we were able to initiate new projects with additional funding secured from donors. These include the construction of two elephant grids in Imenti Forest; the construction of a 40-km-long low fence with outriggers in the Imenti Forest, parallel to our comprehensive electric fence; a feasibility study to reintroduce mountain bongo antelope in Ragati Forest, Mt. Kenya; the establishment of a honey processing cooperative in Eburu; and fire preparedness for Aberdare and Mt. Kenya forests. Concurrently, we have intensified our community scouts-based patrols and further expanded our forest rehabilitation activities in South-Western Mau.

The above was made possible thanks to sponsorships received from a number of Rhino Charge teams and extensive fund-raising activities undertaken by a team of four staff at Rhino Ark supported by a fundraising committee established in the Board of Rhino Ark-UK. At the same time, the Rhino Ark office in the USA is being strengthened to become a major pillar of Rhino Ark's fund-raising capability.

In parallel, Rhino Ark has signed a framework agreement with KWS, KFS, Mount Kenya Trust and Space for Giants with the purpose of developing a carbon project for the Mt. Kenya-Aberdare-Laikipia landscape. This is part of the strategy of establishing long-term financial mechanisms in support of our vital conservation work.

The Rhino Charge 2021, albeit slightly postponed, is scheduled to take place in few weeks. Many thanks to the Rhino Charge committee and its volunteers for their effort to re-design the event to adhere to Covid-19 restrictions and protocols. A big thank you also to all the competing teams, our sponsors and officials for working with us tirelessly to make the event happen. We look forward to great Charge in an amazing venue!



# MAU EBURU ECOSYSTEM

## THE BIG HONEY TOUR

Rhino Ark has teamed up with the Calgary Zoo to carry out research to understand honey practices in Kenya. The idea is to create a Forest Honey Cooperative Society at Eburu Forest. We want to take the time to do thorough background research to learn from others.

A team of two Rhino Ark staff and a successful community honey producer from Eburu Forest spent a week travelling around Kenya in search of honey production training facilities and successful community-managed honey operations.

Findings from the “Big Honey Tour” will be compiled as a forest honey feasibility study with guidelines on hive construction, maintenance, pest control, theft prevention, honey harvesting, processing, branding, promotion and marketing.



Patrick Mwangi (L) from Rhino Ark with Maseto Kusen a beekeeper from the Ogiek community at the National Beekeeping Institute

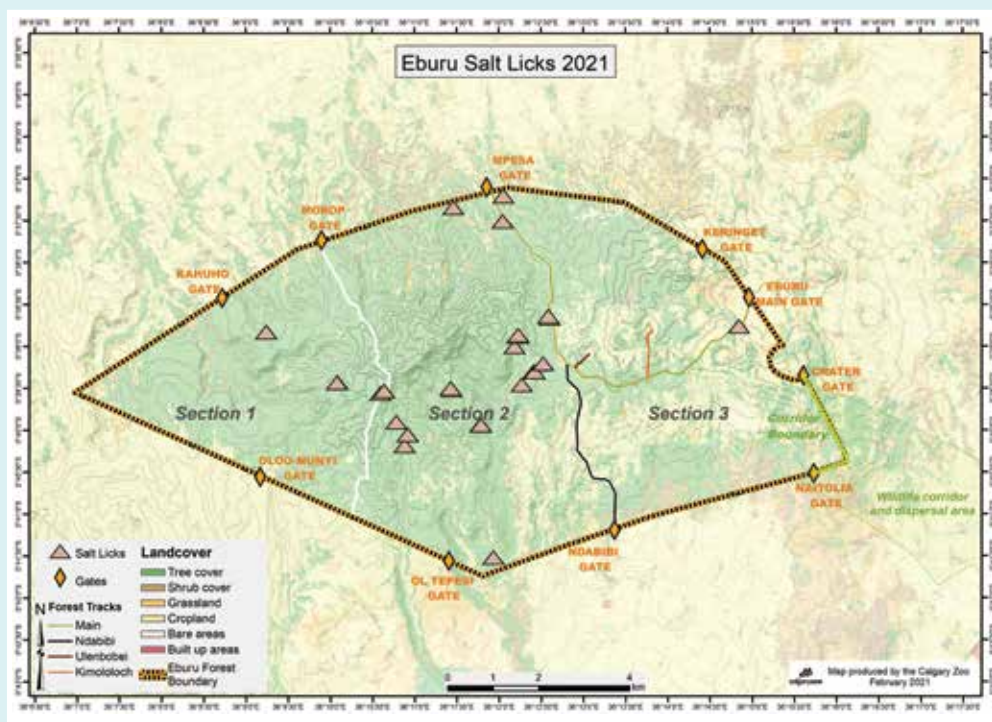


Maseto Kusen (L) and Patrick Mwangi (R) pay a courtesy call at the National Beekeeping Institute



Rhino Ark team at the Baraka Agriculture College

## WILDLIFE FOREST SALT LICKS MAPPED OUT



Salt/mineral licks in Kenyan forests play a similar role to watering holes in the savannah landscapes. They are important gathering places for wildlife. This map shows marked areas with salt licks in Eburu Forest. Rhino Ark in partnership with The Calgary Zoo are mapping out sites where salt/mineral licks are located in Eburu Forest. When we know where the salt licks are, we know where the wildlife is.

We often place camera traps at salt lick entrances, as we are sure to get lots of photos of a wide variety of species. Various species, from honey badgers, tree hyrax, monkeys, antelopes and even leopard, come to feed on the salty clay.

Due to heavy rains this year, many salt licks in Eburu Forest were lost because of landslides.

## COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME

Forest edge farmers in the Eburu ecosystem enjoy fertile soils and good rainfall. They have the potential to earn good livelihoods by adopting best farming practices. Rhino Ark continues to support farmers to gain new skills in order to apply these best practices relevant to their situations.

Rhino Ark facilitated training covering organic farming, water harvesting and dairy farming. Water harvesting, including the use of dam liners, is particularly important because despite good rainfall, the area lacks surface water due to the porous nature of the volcanic soils.

The practical training was carried out at a farm in Morgen area of Eburru location by three specialists, one from the Ministry of Agriculture and two from the private sector. Nineteen farmers, among them Eburu Conservation Champions, participated in the training. They learnt new skills and established valuable contacts.



Community members during the training



Pump demonstration

## ADOPTING ALTERNATIVE DOMESTIC ENERGY SOURCES

Farmers in Eburu are adopting alternative domestic energy sources that reduce pressure on forest resources. The uptake of biogas use in particular has been a highlight of this trend. Some 57 biogas units have so far been installed by farmers within the Eburu ecosystem with logistical support from Rhino Ark.

The success of the biogas initiative in Eburu has enabled Eburu farmers to reach out to their counterparts in Nyandarua, along the eastern Aberdare mountain region. Through this engagement, the Nyandarua farmers are being trained on biogas use and are appreciating its advantages over traditional fuelwood sources.

The community members driving this cross-ecosystem exchange programme include Lydia Nyota, a Rhino Ark Eburu Conservation Champion. Since June 2020, this team has facilitated the training of farmers and the installation of biogas units for their counterpart farmers in the Aberdares.



Lydia Nyota (L) inspecting a farmer's biogas installation



Eburu community Biogas unit training



Cooking with biogas

## KENBRO POULTRY PROJECT REAPS BENEFITS

The KENBRO Poultry Project has provided an opportunity for farmers in the Kiambogo area of Mau Eburu to increase their incomes by introducing them to the KENBRO breed of chickens. The farmers have enthusiastically embraced the new more productive breed and have been rapidly increasing their flocks.

The Rhino Ark team recently engaged Kiambogo farmers to assess the status of the KENBRO programme. Even with the pandemic, some farmers reported earning

surplus income from the project to carry out other activities, including upgrading their homes and adding water storage tanks.

While the farmers have been selling their chickens locally, there are potential markets in urban areas within the sub-county. Rhino Ark is working with the farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture on how to access new markets and organize training in marketing through digital platforms such as social media.



KENBRO farmer upgrades home



Mature Kenbro bird



## EBURRU COMMUNITY FOREST ASSOCIATION TRAINING TOUR TO KARURA FOREST

Rhino Ark in partnership with The Calgary Zoo organized a one-day trip for the Eburru Community Forest Association (ECOFA) to benchmark with the Friends of Karura (FKF) Community Forest Association (CFA) in Karura Forest, Nairobi. The meeting involved presentations and open discussions by both CFAs to share their experiences, challenges and recommendations for improved management of the burgeoning Eburru CFA. The benchmarking was based on the fact that FKF is, arguably, one of the best managed CFAs in Kenya.

Some 32 participants attended the workshop. Highlights included the presentation by Assistant Treasurer, Chantal Mariotte, from the Friends of Karura Forest, highlighting major milestones in Karura that could be

applied to help Eburru CFA to improve their work. Professor Karanja Njoroge offered wisdom from a lifetime of management experience.

The ECOFA had undergone a period of collapse, but has since 2019 been in the process of rebuilding. Rhino Ark has assisted the group with designing and printing of membership cards, running the first comprehensive membership drive in 2020 when 421 new members registered organizing a training workshop in financial management and supporting the completion of all official society paperwork for Eburru CFA.



Karura forest sign post



(ECOFA) benchmarking with Friends of Karura (FKF)

## FOREST PATROLS AND INSPECTION OF THE FENCE

Every week, the Rhino Ark joint de-snaring team that includes KFS and KWS ventures into the forest on patrol. The rangers camp out in each of six forest zones and carry out foot patrols during the day. They look out for snares, signs of hunting, evidence of illegal logging, firewood collection and charcoal production. When an illegal activity is discovered, it is photographed, mapped using GPS coordinates and dismantled. Reports are sent to KFS for documentation to ensure better management of forest security.

Eburru Forest contains notoriously steep and challenging terrain. For example, Mukuru wa Nyatoru is a steep-sided valley in a remote area along the north-western boundary. The terrain makes it challenging to

access through forest patrols and criminal elements take advantage of this to attempt illegal activities.

Fortunately, the Rhino Ark Fence Maintenance Team patrols the fence daily and are diligent in checking for any incursions into the forest. This diligence resulted in the detection of a well-hidden illegal cannabis plantation.

The Eburru Fence Technical Committee inspected the fence in the area and observed the illegal cannabis site. The plants were uprooted and the fencing team commended for their diligence.



Patrol team uprooting cannabis plants



Cannabis plant



## THE EBURU-LAKE NAIVASHA WILDLIFE CORRIDOR GAINS 36 WATERBUCK ANTELOPE

The Eburu-Lake Naivasha wildlife corridor has gained 36 waterbuck antelope through a translocation programme carried out by the Kenya Wildlife Service. Members of the Rhino Ark-supported wildlife corridor committee oversaw the waterbuck release during a meeting at Loldia Farm.

Loldia Farm forms the core of the corridor that links Eburu Forest to Lake Naivasha, and is a suitable habitat for these beautiful antelopes. All animals are healthy and thriving in the ecosystem.



Translocation committee



Bushbucks set free



Translocation truck

## CAMERA TRAPS INSTALLED IN EBURU FOREST

Rhino Ark, Calgary Zoo and the Bongo Surveillance Project have teamed up to place trap cameras in Eburu Forest to gather bio-monitoring data. The team comprises forest-adjacent local community members backed by Rhino Ark/Calgary Zoo Mountain Forest Conservation Partnership through technical and financial support. Fifty camera traps were installed in the forest during a 21-month period in 2018 and 2019. That number was scaled back to 20 in 2020 and 2021 and the cameras placed in mountain bongo-preferred habitats inside the forest.

While the cameras document anything that moves in front of them, the critically-endangered mountain bongo has been a priority. The data obtained will help the research team to understand habitat preferences and threats to the survival of the imperiled endemic species. Camera traps are a non-invasive and an affordable scientific tool for monitoring wildlife. In recent years, live streaming cameras have made wildlife monitoring an exciting, direct management tool.



BSP Team on patrol



Setting up the trap camera



## PYRETHRUM GROWING INTRODUCED AMONG EBURU FRUIT FARMERS

In an effort to continue empowering communities that inhabit areas adjacent to Eburu Forest, Rhino Ark facilitated the training of community groups in Eburu location on pyrethrum farming techniques.

Sixteen people from the Eburu Fruit Farmers Community Group were trained on modern pyrethrum growing techniques by agricultural extension officers from Gilgil sub-county.

The climate along the eastern boundary of Eburu Forest is suitable for pyrethrum, a lucrative cash crop. Local farmers have increasingly taken up pyrethrum growing after realizing that the crop has more

returns than others, including the ubiquitous maize.

Rhino Ark provided support through linking the farmers with agricultural experts who equipped farmers with knowledge to help them maximize their yields. As an added bonus, the farmers were also helped to procure quality pyrethrum seeds at favourable prices.

This livelihood empowerment initiative is a complementary strategy of Rhino Ark to reduce dependency on Eburu forest resources by the community and create a win-win relationship between conservation and local community livelihood needs.



Farmer attending to her pyrethrum farm



Pyrethrum drier

## CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS - BRANDING THE TEAM

Conservation Heroes: Mr. Solomon Muriithi, a former poacher, turned his life around in the late 1990s when he started working as a ranger. His commitment and dedication has inspired community members around Eburu Forest.

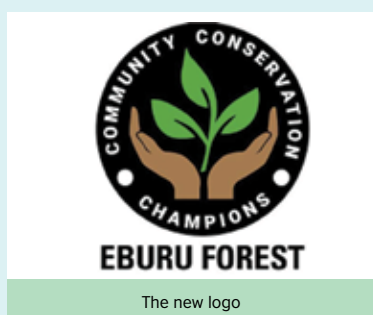
“Being a champion of conservation starts with you. Don’t think about money, think about what you want to do for conservation, because when you think about money, you will not succeed,” Said Muriithi. The Rhino Ark Conservation Heroes initiative honors outstanding individuals who make positive impact in conservation.

Outstanding individuals selected for the programme are community members who have shown initiative to carry out conservation actions in their home areas without remuneration.

The programme is volunteer-oriented with conservation leaders acknowledged through their uniforms and their actions. Rhino Ark has received an injection of financial support from Tusk Trust to improve the programme in 2021.



Champion fitting the uniform



The new logo



## MAU EBURU LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Butterflies



Euphorbia tree



Keringet tapering landscape



Leonotis part dried



Mushroom



Nettle in a tree



Stream



White-eyed slaty flycatcher



Swallowtail butterfly



# SOUTH WESTERN MAU ECOSYSTEM

## RIPARIAN CONSERVATION

Rhino Ark works with South-Western Mau Forest adjacent communities to conserve and protect Riparian conservation areas such as River Cheram. Riparian zones are unique, diverse, and are often the most fertile parts of the landscape. These areas are vulnerable and easily degraded. Damage can be caused by uncontrolled livestock access, and clearing for agriculture.

Riparian areas support diverse vegetation, help maintain bank stability, and increase ecological and economic productivity. These conditions support cleaner water, reduce disease and pests, and retain important nutrients and soil that supports healthy waterways.

We continue to advocate and enlighten the communities on the importance of managing riparian land.



Cheram Waterfall

## FOREST AERIAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME

Periodic Aerial Surveillance flights over the South-Western Mau Forest, coordinated by Rhino Ark, are an invaluable Forest Conservation tool. The flights pinpoint threats to the forest, particularly illegal activities such as logging, charcoal burning, and illegal livestock grazing, all of which lead to forest degradation.

The data collected from the flights is used by law enforcement agencies to carry out ground operations to address the illegal activities, leading to prosecution of culprits. The latest flight was carried out in December 2020. To facilitate better follow up in the prosecution of cases, Rhoda Yator, a magistrate from the Molo Law Courts, participated in the flight. In the post-flight debriefing, Ms Yator advised the law enforcement team on best practices for cases presented in court to ensure successful prosecution.



Surveillance meeting



Aerial surveillance team



## INTEGRATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES INTO RHINO ARK'S COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PROGRAMMES

The integration of local churches into Rhino Ark's Community Conservation programmes has seen tremendous growth in the past few months. Our outreach team has been working closely with local churches at the grassroots, directly reaching over 500 community members so far.

Eight churches now have fully established tree nurseries, with two others, AGC Taita and AGC Kibaraa, in the process setting up nurseries. The churches are influencing conservation in their localities by donating tree seedlings and providing venues for training of the youth and other community members in conservation.

WWCK church in Korabariet is taking lead in this important initiative. The church has been providing saplings from its nursery for planting to restore the nearby degraded area. Schools in the surrounding area have also benefitted from seedlings provided by the church nursery. It is through such actions that the ecosystem will be transformed by the communities.



Conservation Champions tending to a tree nursery

## MONITORING CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMME

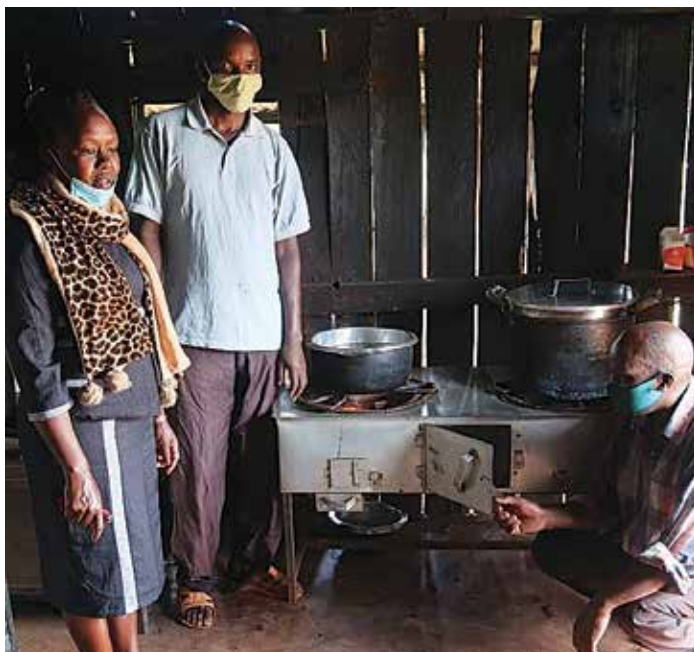
Rhino Ark and Kericho Sub-County Education Directors are jointly monitoring and assessing the Conservation Education Programme in schools, including Emitik Secondary School, Oletach Assis Primary School, and Arorwet Girls Secondary School. Key areas of focus were the distribution of conservation education books and energy saving jikos (stoves) and kilns used locally.

Educating forest-adjacent communities on conservation is paramount to securing the long-term communities' support towards the protection and restoration of mountain forests.

Rhino Ark has spearheaded the development and implementation of Conservation Education programmes, benefitting 46 primary and secondary schools in the 8-km buffer zone of the South-Western Mau Forest ecosystem. So far 178 schools have enrolled in the programme, including in Aberdares, Mount Eburu and South-Western Mau Forest ecosystems.



Conservation Education Curriculum team review charcoal making kiln



Teachers cooking using energy saving jiko



Kuresoi South sub-county Director of Education, Mr. Samwel Chemwolo displaying the conservation education curriculum booklet



## HONEY ASSESSEMENT AND BIO ENTERPRISE

Rhino Ark field officers joined Cheram and Kaplamai location council of elders in a mission to assess honey products and bio enterprise. Bio Enterprise is a compatible livelihood activity that can reduce pressure on forest and boost incomes.

“Beekeeping has always been our tradition, but we lacked proper skills to do bee farming,” said Johana Barno, a community elder. “Many thanks to Rhino Ark for taking up the initiative to empower us through various trainings and workshops. So far we are having good income that is helping majority of us pay school fees for our children, improve tea farmlands by buying manure to boost the yields and in general improve on our living standards.”

During the visit, the council agreed to start a bee farmers’ cooperative society and a central collection point that will help to improve production and marketing of honey.



Traditional hive



Honey harvesting



Displaying the honey combs

## FOREST PATROLS CONDUCTED BY COMMUNITY SCOUTS

Rhino Ark joins regular forest patrols with community scouts and forest rangers to support forest conservation work. The patrols ensure that illegal activities are detected and stopped to ensure the protection of wildlife and their forest habitat.

The community scouts patrol the South Western Mau ecosystem with rangers from the Kenya Forest Service. Community scouts are dedicated individuals who volunteer to support conservation work with logistical support from Rhino Ark. They are champions of conservation at the community level. Some eventually become Rhino Ark Conservation Champions.



Forest patrol



Patrol team identify illegal activity site



## REHABILITATION WORK AT KAPKEMBU

Rhino Ark has embarked on forest rehabilitation work at Kapkembu in South-Western Mau Forest Reserve. Under this initiative, 10 hectares of degraded natural forest will be replanted in this year with support from Platinum Credit Ltd.

Situated along the eastern “cut line” forest boundary in Tinet Location of Kuresoi South,

Kapkembu is the southern-most outpost of the Ndoinet Forest Block. The surrounding forest area, which has suffered degradation over the years, forms part of the upper catchment of the Mara River.

The rehabilitation effort will restore the forest to its former glory with indigenous tree species such as the African Pencil Cedar,

Prunus Africana and others once again standing tall. The work will be carried out by the local community with logistical support from Rhino Ark and guidance from the Kenya Forest Service.



Fence construction



Newly fenced section



Fencing posts

## RELOCATION OF UNCOLONIZED BEEHIVES IN KIPKORIS AND KORABARIET AREAS

Rhino Ark supported the relocation of uncolonized beehives in Kipkoris and Korabariet areas of South-Western Mau. This process also provided a forum for the Ndoinet forester to address beekeepers and cattle grazers from the area on forestry best practices. Rhino Ark joined elders on a mission to assess honey products and bio enterprise. Bio enterprise is a compatible livelihood activity that can reduce pressure on forest and increase income.

According to a recent study titled “State of the Wildlife Economy in Africa”, Kenya produces 25,000 tonnes of honey valued at \$40.4 million annually, directly supporting livelihoods for 547,440 people. Kenya’s current annual value of beeswax stands at \$12.8 million.



Attending to modern beehive



Beekeepers group



## SOUTH-WESTERN MAU LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Amalo River



Waterfall in Emitik Forest



Butterfly



Local Fungi



Chameleon



Stingless, ground dwelling bees



# MT KENYA ECOSYSTEM

## TREE PLANTING AND FOREST REHABILITATION

Rhino Ark planted 5500 indigenous trees in Gathiuru Forest, Mt Kenya, in an event organized in conjunction with Mount Kenya Conservation Forum, Kenya Forest Service and Gathiuru Forest Association. The chief guest was Mr. Julius Kamau, Chief Conservator of Forests, who was accompanied by Hon. Kanini Kega, Member of Parliament and Chair of the Parliamentary Budget and Appropriations Committee.



Community member plants a tree



Forest rehabilitation in progress



CCF, Julius Kamau plants a tree

## MAWINGU MOUNTAIN BONGO SANCTUARY

The Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy (MKWC) is celebrating the erecting of the first post in the construction of the 800-acre Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary. The sanctuary is a fundamental element of the National Recovery and Action Plan for the Mountain Bongo 2019-2023. The sanctuary

represents the next step in the rewilding process of the bongo antelope as part of the MKWC breeding programme that will support the National Bongo Task Force in the reintroduction of the mountain bongo to their indigenous habitats such as Ragati, Eburru and Mau forests.

The first posts were erected in a ceremony presided over by Hon. Najib Balala, the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, accompanied by a 15-year-old girl from a local wildlife club, who became an honorary ranger. The animals will live in the sanctuary until they can be safely rewilded..



Ceremonial plaque construction by CS Balala



Bongo banner



Cabinet Secretary Najib Balala address the team

## FENCE MAINTENANCE ONGOING

The Rhino Ark team regularly inspects the Mt. Kenya electric fence by checking voltage levels.

Regular electric fence maintenance is an initiative meant to keep fence lines effective in ensuring that wildlife do not stray into the local communities' farms. The fence is intended to mitigate human-wildlife conflict. The fences also protect mountain ecosystems from encroachment.



Adam Mwangi, Mt. Kenya Fence and community manager tests the fence voltage



## FUNDING AGREEMENT



Rhino Ark is pleased to announce the signing of a funding agreement for the Mt. Kenya Electric Fence Project amounting to KES 267 million (\$ 2.7m). The funding will pay the construction of a 60km comprehensive fence, three energizer houses, twenty gates, six elephant grids and two years of maintenance expenses.,

## COMMUNITY CONTRACTED TO WATER SEEDLINGS

To ensure the survival of the young trees planted in Gathiuru Forest, local community

members are usually contracted to water them. A water bowser is provided by a

neighboring tourist lodge and the seedlings are watered twice a week.



Water bowser distributing water



Contracted community members display their buckets



Watering seedlings

## HANDING OVER KITHOKA ANIMAL GRID SITE TO THE CONTRACTOR

A team drawn from the Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA), Kenya Wildlife Service, National Administration and Kithoka/Ruii Leaders witnessed the handing over of the Kithoka animal grid site to the contractor. The animal grid is aimed at mitigating human-elephant conflict.

The project is funded through Rhino Ark by Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Elephant Cooperation to a tune of KES 5.7 million.

Mzee Kinoti Kirihamiti, a resident of Kithoka and a victim of human-elephant conflict said that there will no longer be conflict but human-elephant welfare as the community will co-exist in harmony with elephants.



Handing over of the grid construction



Handing over team



Meeting in progress



## MT. KENYA FENCE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

Construction of Mt. Kenya electric fence has continued despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The fence construction think-tank, Fence Technical Committee, inspected the fence constructed on the boundary between Mount Kenya Safari Club and Mt. Kenya Forest Reserve.

The Kenya Wildlife Service was represented by the Assistant Director, Mountain Conservation Area, Mr. George Osuri, Senior Warden Mt. Kenya National Park, Mr. Adan Kala, the Warden Community, Mr. Wandeto, among other officers. The Kenya Forest Service was represented by the Ecosystem Conservator, Nyeri County, Mr. Moses Wahome and Nanyuki Forest Station Manager, Mr. Anthony Tabot. Rhino Ark was represented by the Executive Director, Christian Lambrechts and the Fence/Community Manager, Adam Mwangi.

In Imenti, fence breakage by elephants is a major challenge. To respond to this problem, Rhino Ark is constructing a low fence with outriggers in front of the main fence. Wildlife, especially elephants with time learn how our fences work and how to go through them. This calls for adaptive measures, including a new fence design.



Fence inspection



Constructed fence section



Mt. Kenya fence technical committee



Outriggers



Short fence

## RECRUITMENT OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO BUILD KITHOKA ANIMAL GRID

Rhino Ark has received funding from Wildlife Conservation Society and Elephant Cooperation to build two animal grids at Kithoka and Ruiji, Meru County. Subsequently, the local community have to be fully involved and participate in the building process to ensure that the local community owns the project. Sixteen members of the community were recruited to work with the contractor. To ensure gender equity,

we recruited ten men and six women.

The evaluating panel comprised the area chief, Kenya Wildlife Service Deputy County Warden, the chairman of the Community Forest Association and the Rhino Ark Fence community manager.



Evaluating Panel



Test of Physical fitness



Successful candidates



## KAMUTUNE ONE-WAY ELEPHANT GATE

The one-way elephant gate is an innovation developed to allow elephants to trigger the gate to open when the jumbos approach it from outside. The gate is situated at the elephant corridor that connects the Mt. Kenya ecosystem and Isiolo-Shaba wildlife dispersal area.

The one-way gate was built and jointly managed by Rhino Ark, Mt. Kenya Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service through funding from the Wildlife Conservation Society.



One-way elephant gate at Kamitongu



Elephants approaching one-way elephant gate at Kamutune



The one-way elephant gate at Kamutune opening to allow the migrating elephant to get into the forest



The one-way elephant gate won't open when the elephant approaches it from inside the forest. This means no elephant exits the forest through the gate.



## MT KENYA LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Lobelia Telekii



Euphorbia Tree



growth



Malachite Sunbird



Pink flower



Stonechat bird



Wild flower



# ABERDARES ECOSYSTEM

## THE BONGO SURVEILLANCE PROJECT

The Bongo Surveillance Project in partnership with Rhino Ark runs conservation education and outreach programmes in communities and schools through the Bongo Wildlife Club initiative. This programme gives pupils and students opportunities to explore conservation career choices and introduce them to field knowledge. The initiative has helped participants improve their academic grades in related subjects.

Bongo wildlife club members from Kamburaini Primary School in the Aberdares visited Sangare Conservancy, where they were introduced to several conservation topics.

Topics covered included:

- The importance of electric fences as tools of conservation and human-wildlife conflict prevention,
- Importance of conserving an ecosystem with Sangare as a case study,
- Ornithology – the study of birds – including identifying bird species, birds as ecological indicators, birding as a career in tourism, bird behaviour, migration and feeding,
- Use of binoculars and GPS as birding tools.



Birds breeding-Black smith Plover eggs



Comparing protected with Public forest



Hands on Binocular-Birds viewing

## THE FOREST MULCHER DEMONSTRATION

Rhino Ark, jointly with the Kenya Wildlife Service, Mount Kenya Trust and Cedar Retreat Management are testing a forest mulcher to create and maintain firebreaks in the moorlands of the Aberdares and Mt. Kenya forests.

Forest fires pose a great challenge to both Aberdare and Mt. Kenya ecosystems. In 2019, the Mount Kenya moorlands experienced a total of 60 days of wildfires that burnt 25,000ha of land around the mountain. Various interventions have been proposed in the Forest-Fire Preparedness Management Strategy that includes firebreaks, fire watch towers, training and equipping of firefighting crews.

To prevent fire outbreaks from spreading, the ecosystem is divided into forest blocks that are distinct and separated by a fire break. A fire break is a 15-metre wide stretch where the vegetation is trimmed to the ground. In case of a fire outbreak, the fire will not spread into the neighbouring blocks making it easier for the firefighting crew to put it out. Previously, manual clearing of vegetation using human labour was undertaken. That approach was expensive and labour-intensive and therefore the maintenance of the fire breaks was inconsistent.

Rhino Ark and partners are exploring the use of a forest mulcher and a demonstration of the machinery was undertaken at Aberdare moorland near Shamata Gate thanks to Simba Agritec. The management agreed to undertake a 3km pilot of firebreak which will inform the decision on whether to fully adopt the machinery.



A forest mulcher



Fire fighting management team



## SURVEILLANCE FLIGHT OVER ABERDARES

Deep in the mixed bamboo forest of the Aberdares, a small marijuana field was spotted during a recent flight over Aberdares. The Aberdares Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU) was immediately dispatched to the site to uproot and destroy the illegal crop.



Uprooted cannabis



Uprooting cannabis

## BUSHFIRE DESTROYS 8000 ACRES

Roughly 8,000 acres of grassland and cedar forest in Loldaiga Hills was burned in a bushfire. The British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) deployed 350 troops to help fight the fire and widen the fire breaks alongside hundreds of community volunteers.

There were three helicopters and a crop sprayer, as well as four water tanker trucks pouring water to wet the ground. Support came from Tropicair Kenya, Mount Kenya Trust, the Kenya Defence Forces, neighbouring conservancies and many other volunteers.



Firefighting team



Burnt section



## COMMUNITY LIBRARIES ESTABLISHED

Rhino Ark in partnership with the Challenge Aid, a UK-based Charitable Trust, have successfully established six community libraries around the Aberdare-Mt.Kenya Landscape dubbed the 'School of Hope' (SOH) at Bondeni, Njogu-ini, Wanjerere, King'ong'o, Tetu Boys and Kambirwa.

The School of Hope is intended to be a facility equipped with text books and furniture where learners converge after the normal school hours for private studies and homework. The youthful learners also engage in music, drama and sporting activities. Life skill lessons are also taught and sanitary towels provided to girls.

A team of SOH Supervisors from Mt. Kenya region converged at the

The Rhino Ark Nyeri Office to take stock of achievements and chart the way forward.

The SOH programme has led to:

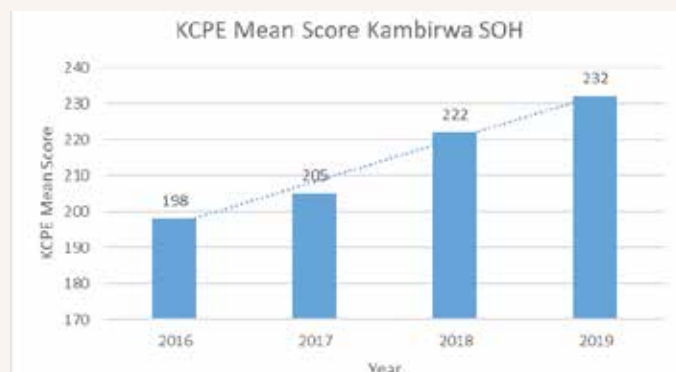
- Improved grades in national exams;
- The introduction of extra-curricular activities including; chess, rugby and cricket;
- Setting up of an organic garden;f
- The setting up of a Menstrual Health programme with Ms. Joyce Mercy, the Supervisor of Njoguini SOH reporting that not a single girl has missed school due to menstruation now that they have a constant supply of sanitary towels.



School of Hope supervisors at the Rhino Ark office in Nyeri



School of Hope supervisors in a meeting



Index graph

## THE ABERDARE TRUST

The month of May marks the birthday of the Aberdare Trust. On 11th May, 2012, Hon. Raila Odinga launched the Aberdare Trust at a colourful event attended by the fence line community.



Burnt section



## ABERDARES LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Foal Suckling



Waterbuck



Crowned eagle



Buffaloes march in a single file, Aberdare



Helichrysum sp. ('Everlasting flowers')



Hypericum sp. (stem chewed to make a local toothbrush)



Wild berries (a delicacy for the primates)



# ABOUT THE RHINO CHARGE

The Rhino Charge is an annual off-road 4x4 competition held in Kenya. Competitors are required to drive to 13 points (guard posts) scattered over approximately 100 km<sup>2</sup> of rough terrain within a 10-hour period. Entrants are supplied with a 1:50,000 scale map of the venue, co-ordinates of the 13 guard posts and the start position the night before the event. Each competitor must plot the guard posts on the map and decide his/her route. The winner is the competitor who visits the most guard posts in the shortest distance (GPS measured).

The event is organised to raise funds to support the activities of the Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust, an NGO dedicated to the noble cause of the conservation and protection of Kenya's mountain ecosystems, the so-called "Water Towers".

## How Can You Support the Rhino Charge?

### ENTER A TEAM OR JOIN AN EXISTING TEAM

Places are limited and competition is fierce but once a Charger, always a Charger! If you are interested in getting involved please contact us on [info@rhinocharge.or.ke](mailto:info@rhinocharge.or.ke) for details how the Charge works and what you need to do to enter

### SPONSOR A CAR OR THE RHINO CHARGE EVENT

The Rhino Charge offers some fantastic branding and PR opportunities and is a unique way to support Rhino Ark's conservation efforts. Details on how to get involved as a sponsor can be found on the Rhino Charge website.

### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For live updates, including information on competitors, event news and #WhyWeCharge, please follow us on our social channels.

 @Rhino.Charge  
 @Rhino\_Charge  
 @RhinoChargeKenya  
 @rhinocharge

### HELP OUT AT THE EVENT

If you're interested in volunteering your time and helping out at the event please do get in touch with the Rhino Charge Organising team on [info@rhinocharge.co.ke](mailto:info@rhinocharge.co.ke).

### ATTEND AS A SPECTATOR

Attending a Charge as a Spectator is a fantastic way to support the event and be a part of one of the most unique off-road 4x4 competition, all in the name of conservation.

For more info on attending the Charge as a Spectator please visit our website.

### JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

To keep up-to-date on the Rhino Charge news, please visit our website and subscribe to our mailing list

[www.rhinocharge.co.ke](http://www.rhinocharge.co.ke)

## HOW TO SPONSOR A CAR

### MPESA

To make an M-Pesa payment go to:  
Safaricom  
Mpesa  
Lipa na M-PESA  
Pay Bill  
Enter business no. 855995  
Account No. (Car no. being sponsored e.g. CAR01)  
Enter amount (minimum KES 2,000)

**MPESA PAYBILL ACCOUNT NUMBER FOR EACH TEAM IS "CAR" FOLLOWED BY THE CAR NUMBER, e.g. "CAR01"**

### BANK TRANSFER

If you wish to make a donation through direct transfer to Rhino Ark's bank account, kindly contact us on:  
Email: [info@rhinoark.or.ke](mailto:info@rhinoark.or.ke),  
Telephone: +254 722 230 929

**Please include the relevant car number you are making payment for in the description for the transfer.**

### CHEQUE

Please ensure that all Cheques are made out to:

RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST

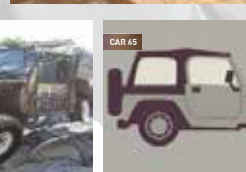
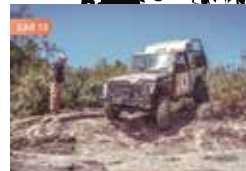
**When delivering a Cheque to Rhino Ark please ensure that the relevant car number is clearly stated on the envelope.**

### ONLINE GIVING

Many of the Teams have set themselves up with online giving pages please go to our website [www.rhinocharge.co.ke](http://www.rhinocharge.co.ke) to see the teams' details.



# 2021 RHINO CHARGE ENTRANTS





# TOP 10 RHINO CHARGE FUNDRAISERS



Over 160 million shillings  
McKittrick/Ray/Jessop/Bovard/Knight/Smith  
(1989-2019) Car 5



Over 93 million shillings  
Peter Kinyua/John Macharia  
(2000-2019) Car 23



Over 60 million shillings  
Mark Tilbury's Hog Charge Team  
(1999-2019) Car 35



Over 59 million shillings  
Adil Khawaja's AK44 Team  
(2005-2019) Car 44



Over 59 million Kenya Shillings  
Stanley Kinyanjui's Magnate Chargers Team  
(2007-2019) Car 62



Over 43 million shillings  
The Avery's Bundufundis Team  
(1996-2019) Car 38



Over 39 million shillings  
Mike & Sarah Higgins  
(1990-2008) Car 22



Over 38 million shillings  
Tim Carstens' Aussie Rules Team  
(2013-2019) Car 63



Over 28 million shillings  
Mark Glen/Bryn Llewellyn's Team 48  
(2005-2019) Car 48



Over 27 million shillings  
Tanya Carr-Hartley/David Carroll's Rhino Rouge Team  
(2004-2019) Car 17



#### PATRONS:

LORD ABERDARE DL.

DR. DAVID WESTERN

DR. SALLY KOSGEI

JONATHAN SCOTT, CHARLES NJONJO

#### US TRUSTEES:

SHEENA BLISS, GEORGE GRIFFIN,

MARK SOMEN, ANDREW FRITZ

#### UK TRUSTEES:

GUY TRITTON, SIR KIT KABERRY,

JOHN BOWDEN, NICHOLAS KUHLE,

JOHN EDWARDS, PATRICK ORR

#### KENYA TRUSTEES:

PETER KINYUA

DR PEREZ OLINDO

ALAN MCKITTRICK

BRIAN HAWORTH, MICHAEL TURNER

ADIL KHAWAJA, JONATHAN SOMEN

## THANK YOU!

Rhino Ark wishes to thank the following people and companies who have provided services or specific donations in cash or kind to Rhino Ark.

- **ChallengeAid** - Support to the Schools of Hope (Aberdares)
- **KWS** - Rhino Ark Offices
- **KWS** - Provision of fence materials
- **IDH-ISLA & Finlays** - Support to the surveillance flights and conservation of the mountain bongo (South Western Mau)
- **Flamingo Horticulture Kenya Ltd** - Supply of plastic posts
- **Calgary Zoological Society** - Support to the conservation of Eburu Forest
- **Calgary Zoological Society** - Support to the conservation of Ragati Forest, Mt. Kenya
- **Rare Species Conservatory Foundation** - Support to the conservation of the mountain bongo
- **Wildlife Conservation Society** - Construction of two elephant grids in Mt. Kenya
- **Elephant Cooperation** - Construction of two elephant grids in Mt. Kenya
- **Eburru Rafiki** - Community awareness raising and de-snaring operations in Eburu
- **ClimateCare** - Support towards planting and maintaining 20,000 trees in Mt. Kenya
- **AutoXpress** - Provision of tyres for all Rhino Ark vehicles
- **MPESA Foundation** - Support for the maintenance of Eburu Electric Fence and the establishment of tree nurseries in schools
- **Tusk Trust** - support towards community scouts in Eburu and Aberdares
- **Tusk Trust** - support towards community engagement and firefighting preparedness in Eburu.
- **Platinum Credit** - support towards reforestation in South Western Mau
- **African Elephant Fund (UNEP)** - support towards elephant conservation in Imenti Forest, Mt. Kenya.
- **Upper Tana Natural Resources Management Project (IFAD-GOK)** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya
- **Kenya Pipeline Company** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya

## Order your copy of:

- Environmental, social and economic assessment of the fencing of the Aberdare Conservation Area. Available for KES 3,000 only.
- Rhino Ark Profile.
- Rhino Charge book KES 5000 only.
- 2020 Rhino Charge Calendar for KES 1,000 only.
- Mau Eburu Visitors' Guidebook for KES 1,500 only.

Act now!...

help us to continue our work

#### Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust

KWS Headquarters, Langata Road  
P.O. Box 181 Uhuru Gardens, 00517 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: +254 (0)20 2136010, +254 (0)20 2136011  
Mobiles: +254 (0)733-632460, +254 (0)724 604233  
Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke  
Website: www.rhinoark.org / www.rhinocharge.co.ke

#### Rhino Ark (UK) Charity No. 1047083

Mr. Guy Tritton, Chairman  
c/o Hogarth Chambers,  
5 New Square, London WC2A 3RJ  
Tel: +44 (207) 421 2833, Fax: +44 (207) 404 0505  
Email: guytriton@hogarthchambers.com, guytriton@virgin.net  
Website: www.rhinoark.org  
Website Donations: justgiving.com/charity/rhinoark

#### Rhino Ark (US)

A registered US Charity with IRC 501 (c) 3 Status  
Ms. Sheena Bliss  
P.O. Box 46250 Madison, WI 53744-6250  
Tel: +1 608 4423 536, Fax: +1 608 4425 264  
Email: sheena@wildlifedefenseusa.org  
www.wildlifedefenseusa.org

Website Donations:

Firstgiving.com/Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust Inc.  
Banking Details: US Bank, Gamon Place, Madison WI 53719

Please make cheques payable to:



THE RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST  
KWS Headquarters,  
P.O. Box 181 – 00517, Uhuru Gardens, Nairobi, Kenya  
Landlines: +254 (0) 20 213 6010 / 213 6011,  
Mobiles: +254 (0) 733 632 460, +254 (0) 724 604 233  
Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke  
websites: www.rhinoark.org / www.rhinocharge.co.ke

Your donations of **USD 200 or KES 20,000**  
will maintain **250 metres** of fence

## FRIENDS OF RHINO ARK

ACT NOW AND HELP US TO CONTINUE OUR VITAL WORK

I/We: .....  
of .....  
.....

Please tick your selection and fill in where applicable:

- ☐ We wish to receive ARKive, the bi-annual newsletter, and enclose a cheque/Postal Order for KES 1,000 or US\$ 10.
- ☐ We wish to make a donation in the form of cheque/Postal order for 2021 (KES/US\$).
- ☐ We wish to complete a Standing Order / Deed of Covenant - please send an application form.





## HELP TO SAVE OUR MOUNTAIN FORESTS AND THEIR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE



### WHY IT MATTERS

The Aberdares, Mt. Kenya and the Mau mountain forests are key 'water towers' of Kenya. They are the sources of major rivers that provide the much-needed water to the city of Nairobi, which is the main contributor to the country's GDP. These rivers support the livelihoods of millions of households in the rural areas and are the lifeline of key conservation and tourism areas downstream. Together these three mountain ecosystems provide yearly ecological services to Kenya worth KES 412 billion (\$4.12 billion).

These important forests include World Heritage Sites, Important Bird Areas and National Parks. The critically endangered Black rhino and Mountain bongo antelope, the African elephant and the vulnerable leopard are among the iconic wildlife species that inhabit them.

The forest-adjacent communities are critical to conservation of these forests. They are the front-line guardians. Conversely, they are the most directly dependent on the forests and also the most impacted by human-wildlife conflict.



### WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

- 1.6 BILLION KENYA SHILLINGS (\$16 MILLION) invested in conservation
- 650 KILOMETERS of game-proof electrified fences built
- Over 500,000 hectares of MOUNTAIN FOREST SECURED
- 80,000 KENYAN FAMILIES protected from human/wildlife conflict, and their livelihoods secured
- 178 SCHOOLS actively learning about conservation
- 90 HECTARES OF FOREST rehabilitated

# DONATE!

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We welcome your kind donations to support our work. Your contributions help us achieve the following:

### 1. Fencing programme

Our comprehensive game-proof electrified fences help secure prime indigenous forests and resolve human/wildlife conflict, keeping forest-adjacent communities engaged in conservation. One kilometre of electrified fence costs KES 2.5 million (\$ 25,000). Once built, fences must be maintained continuously. We have 174 fence attendants maintaining our fences daily, supported by eight 4x4 vehicles. Fence maintenance costs KES 80,000 (\$800) per kilometre per year.

### 2. Endangered species and forest conservation

#### *Support our community-based patrol programme:*

The Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU) is an elite, 7-man team of community scouts that patrols the Aberdare ecosystem. AJSU targets illegal activities such as logging, charcoal kilns, snaring and wildlife trapping. They also monitor wildlife abundance and distribution, gather intelligence information, and participate in forest fire fighting. KES 73,500 (\$735) can cover a 2-week field mission.

In Eburu, a 5-man Foot Patrol Team responds to local intelligence reports to enact dark sting operations to catch would-be wildlife or forestry criminals. Their main targets are wildlife snares, illegal logging and charcoal kilns. KES 24,000 (\$240) can cover a 2-day field operation.

#### *Support forest rehabilitation:*

Large areas of prime mountain forest habitats degraded by illegal human activities and forest fires need to be rehabilitated. Donate to help restore our mountain forests. KES 100 (\$1) will enable planting and caring for a tree seedling.

### 3. Community conservation and livelihoods

Our community programmes are geared towards reducing forest adjacent communities' reliance on forest resources, improving their livelihoods, and raising their environmental awareness. These interventions result in their participation in forest conservation, adoption of on-farm best practices and improvement of incomes.

## HOW TO DONATE

1. Mobile money
2. Bank Transfer
3. PayPal

If you wish to make a donation kindly contact us on:

Email: [sheenab230@gmail.com](mailto:sheenab230@gmail.com)

Telephone: +1 608 576 0571

Or Visit our website donations page

<https://rhinoark.org/donate/>

