MOUNT KENYA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY NEWS

Q1 Newsletter 2023 Issue 6

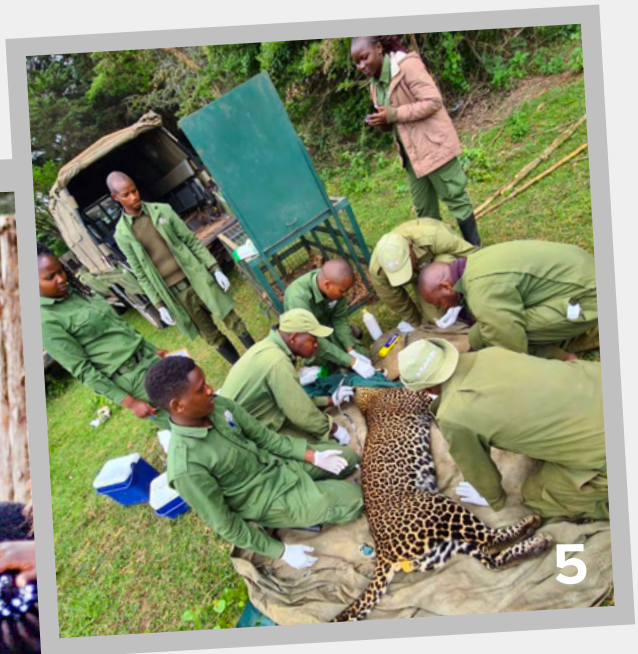


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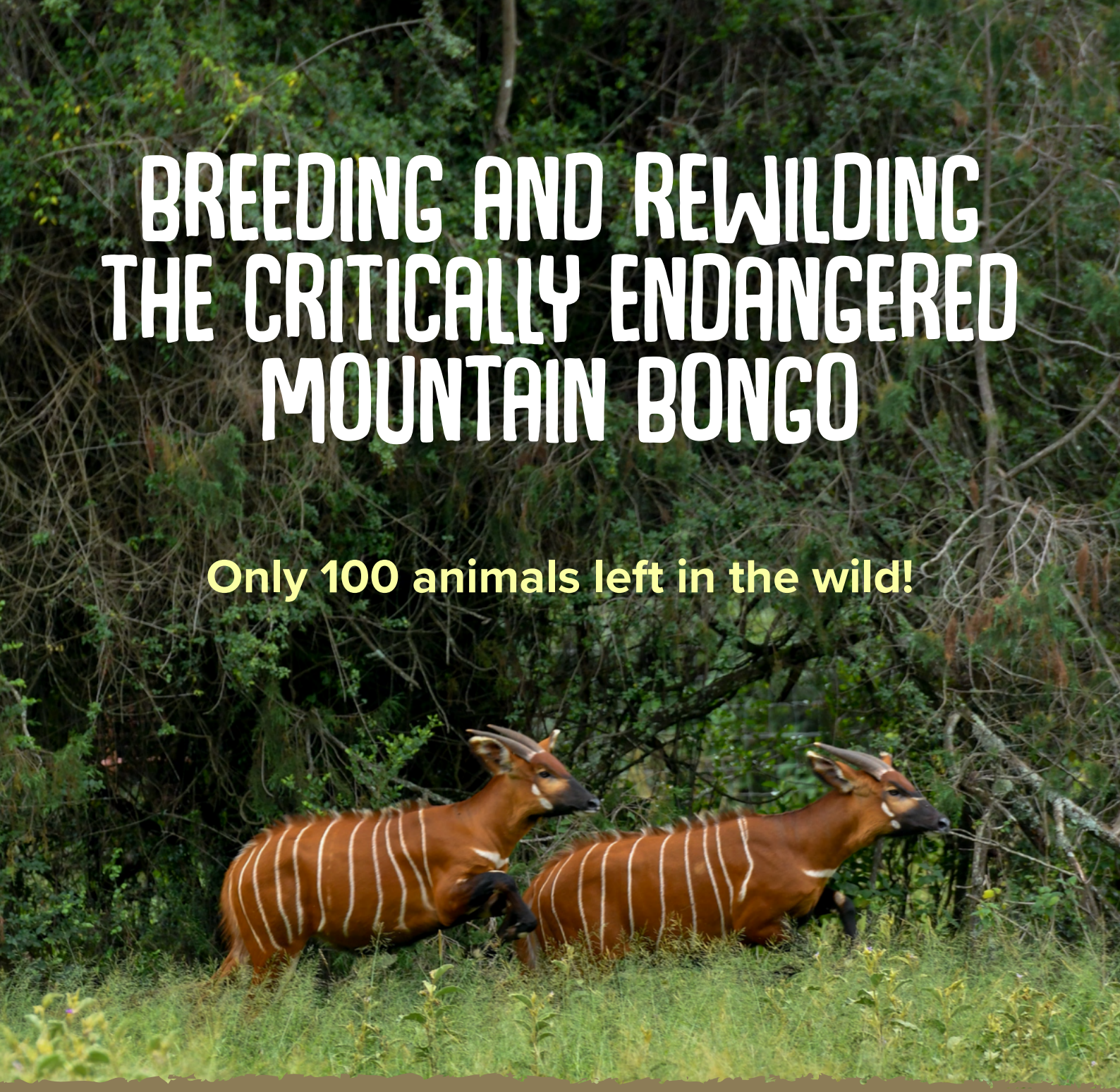






BREEDING AND REWILDING THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED MOUNTAIN BONGO

Only 100 animals left in the wild!



See our website for details of the Bongo Breeding and Rewilding programme: www.mountkenyawildlifeconservancy.org or scan the QR code.

CHAIRPERSON OPENING LETTER

DEAR READER

Dear reader,

As 2023 gets into full swing, we wanted to share with you some of the key highlights from the past three months. It's been a busy time at the Conservancy, full of excitement, animal rescues, and bongo births.

Following the opening of the world's first Mountain Bongo Sanctuary last March, we've seen the population grow to about 70 animals. In January alone, we welcomed five new baby bongos. This is a fantastic sign that the bongos are thriving and could not have been possible without the tireless dedication of our team.

Over the past three months, we've also continued our community outreach programmes, welcoming hundreds of students on school visits. These visits are fundamental for equipping students with the tools and knowledge to protect wildlife for decades to come.

These programmes are also vital for inspiring students, particularly young women, to consider a career in conservation – and we're lucky to have so many working at Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy. In celebration of International Day of Women in Science on February 11th, these brilliant women have outlined what they love most about their job

Of course, none of our conservancy work would be possible without your ongoing support. Something for which we are so grateful. From protecting endangered wildlife to inspiring future generations to take up the cause of conservation, your generous donations make it happen. Please find information on how you can continue to give your support can be found on page 13 and 14.

2023 is shaping up to be a brilliant year, and the team could not be more excited for what lies ahead.

From all of us at the Conservancy, we hope you have a wonderful Easter.

Best wishes,

Nyawira Kariuki
CHAIRPERSON
Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Trust



SECOND TRANCHE RELEASE INTO THE MAWINGU SANCTUARY



Read on to see exactly how it happened...

Last November, we successfully released another five bongos into the Mawingu Sanctuary, bringing the total number of bongos in the Sanctuary to ten! The animals released were: Baringo (F), Mzizi (F), Ghana (F), Laikipia (M), and Watamu (M).

The initial five bongos were translocated in March 2022, during the official opening of the Sanctuary.

The bongos were released in an intricate five-day process that involved selection, capture and translocation, and post-release monitoring to ensure their safe welfare in this sanctuary.



The event marked another significant step in our mission to reverse the extinction of the species. We look forward to releasing another ten bongos this year.

GENERAL UPDATES

2023 has been an exciting year so far for the Mountain Bongo Breeding and Rewilding Programme at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy. We've seen the population grow to a herd of 70 animals!

This has been possible through the dedication of the team of vets, animal caregivers, and wildlife and security teams on the ground, as well as through the generous donations from our supporters all around the world.

Together we have made great strides towards our goal of preventing the extinction of this majestic species.



CAPTURING OF THE LEOPARD

Following the excitement around the opening of the Mawingu Sanctuary, towards the end of the year, danger lurked ahead – a leopard was spotted on the trail cameras inside the Sanctuary! The team immediately set out to capture him safely, but the leopard was crafty and managed to manoeuvre his way around all the traps we set for him. Luckily, no mountain bongos were attacked during this period.

On Christmas Eve, the tide finally turned when the team was able to successfully bait him with meat in a trap. He was then safely transported and released in Loisaba Wildlife Conservancy, where he has since found a happy new home in the wild.

Special thanks to the brave team of animal keepers and security staff at the Conservancy, as well as Dr Aruho, who provided technical and professional veterinary services, supported by the KWS team.





Did you know that we currently host a three-limbed leopard at the Animal Orphanage?

She has been with us since 2019 and continues to enjoy sunbathing camouflaged in the high branches of the Acacia tree in her den.

GENERAL UPDATES

TREK FOR THE BONGO



Last year, we held our inaugural 'Trek for the Bongo' event, which turned out to be a great success!

Eli Roimen, member of the leadership team at Janus Continental Group (JCG), summitted Mount Kenya three times over three days to raise awareness and funds for the Mountain Bongo Rewilding Programme.

Over the campaign's period from August-September in 2022, Eli and his friend Emmanuel were able to reach over 500 people, across 9 countries and raise over a quarter of a million Kenya shillings. Big congratulations to them both for doing us proud by flying the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy flag high at the Lenana peak.

Look out for the Trek for the Bongo 2023 edition!

MOUNTAIN BONGO BIRTHS

This has been another bumper quarter for bongo births! Since January, we've welcomed 5 new bongo calves into the growing herd at Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy. Dhaabu, Jabali, Sabasaba, Machachari and Eburu are allbeaming new mothers. The first two births - within a day of each other - were celebrated in January while the other three were celebrated in February.

The most notable birth was Jabali's calf, which took place in one of the breeding bomas on 22nd January. We were delighted by the news; however we noted through the daily monitoring patrols that Jabali and her calf did not bond well and that she wasn't suckling.

The team brought the calf to the Animal Orphanage for closer monitoring and fostering. They have also been playing with him in the warm sunshine every morning and evening. His inquisitive nature has started to show as he runs around the Animal Orphanage

The calf is doing well and is in great health thanks to the intervention of the Mountain Bongo Program team. We wish Jabali's calf a long and healthy life as he contributes to the population growth of this critically endangered species.

The other births include: Dhaabu's calf, Sabini, Mshindi and Ebenezer who will be available for adoption once they hit the 1-month mark. You can have the privilege of being a foster parent by getting in touch with us by sending us an email at info@mountkenyawildlifeconservancy.org. There are several tiers of adoption to suit how you would like to leave a legacy at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy.



ANIMAL ORPHANAGE

ANIMAL RESCUES



The first quarter of the year has been an exciting one for the Animal Orphanage team. It's been all about calf rescues!

In late February, the rangers at the neighbouring Ol Pejeta Conservancy found an abandoned one-day old Buffalo calf (born 24th Feb). She was being trailed by jackals who had bitten off a piece of her tail. We think the buffalo mother left her calf in search of food and water and forgot the route back to her baby.

The dry season is hitting hard around Laikipia and cases like these are the result of diminishing water and food which is driving wildlife to trek long distances for survival.

The management of Ol Pejeta Conservancy called us, and we quickly intervened to bring the calf to the Animal Orphanage. We plan to rewild her once stable, and a clean bill of health has been given by ourveterinarians.

In her time at the animal Orphanage, the calf has grown strong and already started playfully interacting with the other animals. She remains under the watchful attention of our caregivers and guests are welcome to visit and see her!







OUR TRIP TO RUMURUTI, KENYA

Late last year, we took a trip to Rumuruti to return a goat that lovingly raised an orphaned gazelle here at the Animal Orphanage.

To recap, in 2021, a seven-year-old Maasai boy Sarau saved a baby gazelle after he spotted it without a mother. With the baby so weak, Sarau tried to save her by having her suckle on a goat. It worked like magic, and the pair quickly bonded.

Sarau took care of the gazelle until the orphan was relocated to the Animal Orphanage at the Conservancy by Kenya Wildlife Service. But the baby gazelle would not drink from a bottle and longed for her adopted mother. In Rumuruti, Sarau was stressed and concerned about whether the gazelle would survive without her foster mother - the goat. The Masai family reached out and kindly agreed to lend the goat to the Conservancy.

The goat and the gazelle were reunited at the Animal Orphanage where the goat has lovingly raised the gazelle into adulthood over a period of one and a half years.

The Masai treasure their herds as a sign of wealth, and so releasing the goat to the Animal Orphanage was a true show of dedication towards ensuring the wild gazelle was properly taken care of. We showed our gratitude by taking good care of the goat. We decided to breed her, and she bore twins!

The Masai family was delighted to receive their goat back along with two additional blessings. They welcomed us warmly and hosted us for the day, where we enjoyed a delicious meal and rejoiced in this happy ending for all.

EDUCATION AT THE CONSERVANCY

Community outreach and school visits form a crucial pillar of our work at the Conservancy. We also recognize team members who have achieved feats in their own educational journeys. We caught up with three amazing ladies from Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, as we celebrated the International Day of Women in Science on February 11th.







Tell us about yourself and what made you interested in joining the STEM/wildlife conservation space?

Edel:

My name is Edel Odhiambo, and I work as a Veterinary Officer at Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy. I'm responsible for managing the health and welfare of the endangered mountain bongos, as well as other wildlife.

I've always been an inquisitive and adventurous person. Watching animals interact in their natural environment sparked a life-long curiosity in me to learn more about these animals and their experiences. After studying at the University of Nairobi, I knew I wanted to work in conservation and become a wildlife vet.

Being able to interact with animals daily has been a life-changing experience for me, and I can't wait to see what the next year holds.

Mophene:

I am Mophene Adhiambo, a Conservationist at Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy . In addition to ensuring the wellbeing of the animals in our care, I also have the fun job of working with schools on our conservation education programmes.

Continued on page 10...

I believe that passion, enthusiasm, hard work and love for what I do are the biggest drivers of success. This belief guides all my work and makes every day at the Conservancy fulfilling.

Damaris:

My name is Damaris Ngina. I work as an Animal Keeper at the Conservancy.

Growing up, human-wildlife conflict was common in my home area. This sparked a passion in me to pursue Wildlife Management, so that I could learn and educate people on how to promote peaceful co-existence between humans and wildlife.

After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Management, I took up my role at the Conservancy and have been working to foster deeper bonds between humans and wildlife ever since.

2. What does an enabling environment for women in STEM/wildlife conservation look like for you? How can we foster such spaces?

Edel:

Let's start by acknowledging that the Wildlife Conservation field is male-dominated. However, as time goes by, women are slowly gaining interest and finding space.

An enabling environment for me looks like a supportive environment. My job is highly dependent on teamwork, and so often requires input and support from the rangers, animal keepers, drivers, and fellow vets and management around me.

Communication is also important. By understanding each other's strengths and weaknesses, we're able to work together as a team to leverage our individual specialities and ensure we do the best job possible.

Mophene:

For me, an enabling environment is one that gives equal opportunities to women at work without discrimination or bias.

The Conservancy has given me a greater opportunity and space to show my hard work without any bias. All gratitude to our management – I could not think of a better place to work.

Damaris:

There have historically been very few opportunities for women to pursue STEM careers. This has now started to change, with many organisations including Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy championing women in conservation. This is a big step forward and I hope many more women in the future across the continent have the opportunity to pursue their passions.

3. Is there anything you wish you had known as you pursued a career in STEM/wildlife conservation?

Edel:

I wish I had known it feels this good to be at the forefront of conservation. I would have started this journey earlier. It is very rewarding to give an animal a second chance of survival. It brings so much joy to my heart and a warmth that can't be put into words.

Mophene:

Conservation is a competitive field. It's a field of passionate and hardworking individuals. It connects you emotionally to the animals and their environment. It's an amazing platform. I don't have any regrets.

Continued on page 11...

EDUCATION AT THE CONSERVANCY

Damaris:

Lack of information on the opportunities and the various field that are available in wildlife conservation and in STEM was a big challenge to me. I had to pursue the course without knowing what lay ahead of it. This sometimes becomes a barrier to many women who fear getting into careers they know little about.

4. **What advice would you give to younger girls & women interested in breaking into the STEM/wildlife conservation space?**

Edel:

My advice would be nothing that is worth the while comes easy in life. Identify what you love and give your all to it.

Mophene:

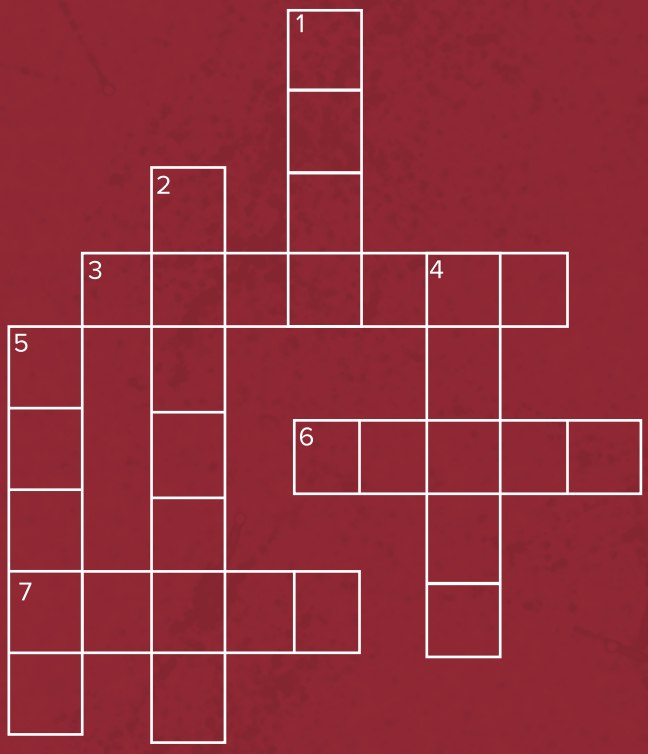
Growing up, my mother gave me two choices of study at my tertiary level of education: teaching and nursing.

She believed that wildlife conservation was a "man's job". But nothing could be further from the truth. Conservation is all about passion, so if that's what you're passionate about, then go for it. You have every chance at success.

Damaris:

I would encourage all young women to consider a career in STEM, and embrace the opportunities this subject area presents.

KIDS SECTION



Across

3. The number of animals at the Conservancy
6. The month the Sanctuary was opened in
7. The month that Easter is in this year

Down

1. The number of baby Bongos since January
2. The three-legged creature who snuck into the Conservancy
4. The number of times Eli climbed Mount Kenya
5. I am the boy who saved the baby gazelle

ACTIVITIES AT THE CONSERVANCY

With the long Easter weekend coming up, our doors remain open for you and your families and friends to come and celebrate with us. The Animal Orphanage is open daily from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, while various activities in the Conservancy are available up until 7.00 pm on select days.

We are located in Nanyuki, a 3-hour drive (or a 30-minute flight) from Nairobi.

If you would like to book an activity in advance or if you have any questions, please reach out to us on info@mountkenyawildlifeconservancy.org or on +254 (0) 20 233 0097. Accommodation for overnight trips is available at a fee upon request.

We have lots of activities at the Animal Orphanage, making it a perfect outing for a family day out!



RATES AS OF FEBRUARY 2023

ACTIVITY		EA CITIZEN		RESIDENT		NON-RESIDENT	
		ADULT	CHILD	ADULT	CHILD	ADULT	CHILD
ANIMAL ORPHANAGE ENTRY FEE	ADULT (>12 YEARS) CHILD (6-12 YEARS)	1,000	500	2,000	1,000	3,000	1,500
Guided Conservancy Tour Single Entry that gives the guest access to the free-range area of the Conservancy grounds (excluding the Bongo paddocks) Available daily from 9am-6pm. Prior booking of at least 1 day required.	Inclusive of: ▶ 3-hour guided Game Drive within the Conservancy (Min 2 pax)	5,000					
Mountain Bongo Experiences - Bongo Tracking Track the Mountain Bongo in the forest paddocks. Available daily from 6am-7am. Prior booking of at least 1 day required	Inclusive of: ▶Nature interpretation through the track ▶Bongo sighting and feeding	10,000					

For those who would like to remember their trip to Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy with a souvenir, we have a gift shop with a variety of items for you to choose from. Some of our best sellers are the Mountain Bongo themed plush toys! 100% of profits go directly to our conservation efforts.





GET INVOLVED

If you would like to leave your mark at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, there are several ways to do so.

ADOPT AN ANIMAL

Annual to lifelong foster care of an animal of your choice with varying naming rights dependent on value of donation. The foster parent is entitled to updates on the animal's welfare and a certificate of recognition. Please note that there is a lot of love to go around and that sometimes the animals may have more than one foster parent.

One time Donation Amount	$100	$200	$500	$1,500
Open to	Individuals, couples and families			Individuals, couples, families and organizations
What it includes	▶ Fostering of one animal of choice for one year. ▶ You'll receive a certificate with the animal's photo, identifying you as the foster parent.	▶ Fostering of one animal of choice for two years. ▶ You'll receive a certificate with the animal's photo, identifying you as the foster parent. ▶ You'll receive updates on the animal's welfare.	▶ You'll become the lifelong guardian of your chosen animal. ▶ You'll receive a certificate with the animal's photo identifying you as the foster parent. ▶You'll also receive a detailed history, general information and updates on the animal's welfare	▶ You'll become a lifelong guardian of your chosen animal. ▶ You will get to name the animal. ▶You'll receive a certificate with the mounted animal's photo identifying you as the foster parent. ▶You'll also receive a detailed history, general information and updates on the animal's welfare. ▶ Exclusive Bongo tracking experience on every visit to the Conservancy for the individual foster parent (max 2 pax).



PLANT A TREE OR LEAVE A DONATION

GET INVOLVED ACTIVITIES (in KES, unless indicated)		
Activity		**Rate**
Tree Planting Play a part in habitat conservation and restoration by planting or adopting a tree to be planted by community members within the Mount Kenya eco system	**Rate for two seedlings and planting** Open to individuals, couples, families and organizations	1,000
Donations We invite our visitors to leave a mark at the Animal Orphanage. We put up tiles in honour of all our donors. These tiles are specially hand printed and permanently mounted at the Animal Orphanage 'Wall of Sponsors'	Bush Baby Tile	$100
	Green Tile	$200
	Golden Tile	$500
	Platinum Tile	$1,000
	Wildlife Guardian	$10,000