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Lulu and her calf need your support.  
[Please Donate](#)

Breaking News

**VICTORY FOR ELEPHANTS**

**August 29, 2016**

**California bans  
the bullhook!**



Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a ban on

## News from the Amboseli Trust for Elephants

July - August 2016

### Greetings!


*CITES - the Convention in Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora - is a multilateral treaty, which was ostensibly created to ensure that endangered plants and animals are not threatened by trade. Originally signed in 1973 by 80 countries there are now 182 parties to the convention. The parties meet every three years and this year they will meet in Johannesburg, South Africa at the end of September. (See the article below.)*

*It is important to know that CITES is a trade convention, not a conservation convention. The emphasis is on the successful regulation of trade in endangered species not in stopping trade. All trade is allowed unless it can be shown to be seriously detrimental. Often that is very difficult to prove and in those circumstances trade will continue. Species may be put on one of three lists called Appendices. Appendix 1 affords the most protection and Appendix III the least.*

*The African elephant is currently split-listed, that is, all populations across Africa are on Appendix I, except those of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are on Appendix II. What it means is that the Appendix I countries cannot trade in ivory or any other products of elephants such as feet, hair or skin, nor can there be trade in live elephants. The Appendix II countries can trade with certain regulations although there is currently a moratorium on ivory. However, export of live elephants is allowed and Zimbabwe, for example, has been sending dozens of elephant calves to zoos in China over the last few years.*

*At this upcoming meeting in Johannesburg a proposal has been put forward led by the Kenya delegation to uplist all elephant populations to Appendix I. ATE resoundingly approves of this proposal and we will be working hard for its acceptance. You can help by signing the petition in the article below.*

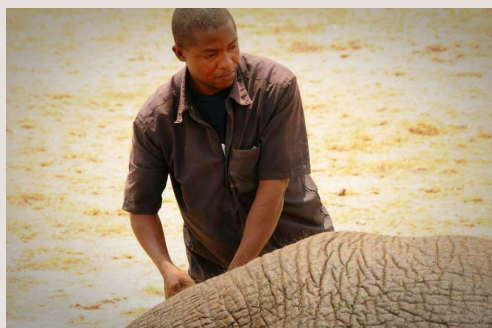
**Cynthia Moss**  
Director  
Amboseli Trust for Elephants

 Like us on Facebook

the use of bullhooks, the sharp implement handlers use to control elephants by force. California is now the second state to pass such a law, the first being Rhode Island. Our good friends at PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society) were instrumental in getting the ordinances passed in both states.

Public attitudes about the treatment of elephants are slowly but surely changing as attested to by the passage of this bill. PAWS's CEO Ed Stewart stated: "This is the beginning of the end for the use of elephants and other wild animals in entertainment."

## Welcome (back!) Dr. Ndambiri



Dr. Ndambiri in action during our 2011 collaring operation. Photo H. Rasmussen

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has sponsored a Kenya Wildlife Service vet unit in Amboseli for the last three years to help deal with wildlife emergencies. We are delighted to welcome Dr. Ephantus Ndambiri back to the ecosystem as he takes up the Amboseli post this month. Dr. Ndambiri was the vet on our successful collaring operation in 2011, and we look forward to working with him again.

## We Salute our Successful Students



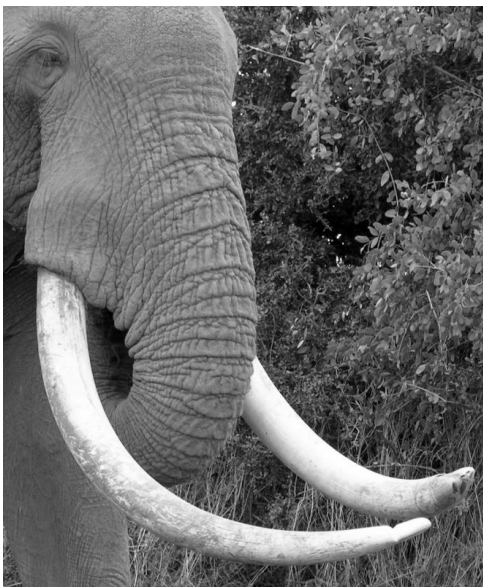
Students Sylvia Somoire and Timothy Tetu with ATE's Sylvi Nyambura

Two of our university students will be graduating this year and we are very proud of these hardworking young people from the area surrounding Amboseli. Sylvia Somoire will receive a Bachelor of Arts degree and Timothy Tetu a Bachelor of Finance & Commerce. We wish them the best of luck in their next endeavours. Timothy has decided to go on to study wildlife management and we will be sponsoring him for a course at the Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute.

ATE's scholarship program is going from strength to strength, and we are supporting more students than ever in higher education and vocational courses. If you would like to donate to allow us to continue helping bright young people please go to [Our Website](#) or contact [info@elephanttrust.org](mailto:info@elephanttrust.org).

## Why Trading Ivory Is a Death Knell for Elephants

The debate on how we value elephants and the future we envision for them is crystallising ahead of the CITES Conference of the Parties due to begin at the end of September. In what promises to be a bitterly fought meeting in Johannesburg, ATE Director of Science Prof. Phyllis Lee and US Executive Director Dr. Betsy Swart will support the Kenyan delegation in lobbying for measures to secure the future for African elephants.



"Only Elephants Should Wear Ivory"

Kenya leads a 29-country strong coalition backing five proposals, which collectively place elephants beyond commercial use, meaning that they and their body parts cannot be traded. Specifically the five proposals are:

1. To remove the so-called "split listing" that gives two different levels of protection to African elephants, depending on where they live. This ignores the biological reality of trans-boundary populations and the results of the Great Elephant Census, showing massive declines in almost every elephant population surveyed.
2. To close domestic ivory markets in all African elephant range states. This would block trade at source, and reduce the pressure on intergovernmental operations which are a costly burden on range state governments.
3. To halt the so-called Decision Making Mechanism, which has overstepped its own stated purpose and pre-supposes that a resumption of the ivory trade is inevitable, desirable and beneficial to elephant conservation.
4. To destroy all existing ivory stockpiles, placing all ivory permanently beyond commercial use.
5. To restrict exports of live wild African elephants to the purpose of *in situ* conservation programmes only, thereby preventing their sale to zoos in the U.S., China and elsewhere.

## Please sign this important petition to CITES to support the African elephant range state proposals. [Click Here.](#)

ATE personnel and collaborators have helped craft the proposals, and our data have provided hard science both for the proposals and for lobbyists to take to the CITES meeting. As we write this newsletter, Phyllis Lee has just had a paper accepted in the journal *Current Biology*. Writing with Prof. David Lusseau of Aberdeen University, the paper uses the long term population data from Amboseli to model the effects of various "sustainable use" scenarios. Although the full results will not be released until September 15th, we can say these analyses indicate all but the smallest off take levels could drive elephant populations to extinction.

We believe passionately that elephants should not be traded in any form, and that they deserve respect and protection. On the other side, proponents of the trade are equally passionate in their belief that allowing countries to trade ivory opens up valuable revenue streams for communities and conservation. Recent evidence from censuses, biologists and economists moves the debate beyond opinion and conjecture, and clearly shows why trading ivory can never result in a secure future for Africa's elephants.

We stand with our colleagues to keep fighting for that goal.

[Watch our films on YouTube](#)

## What Does Our US Office Do?

### Thanking our Donors

We couldn't do our work without these generous people:

Glady Cofrin & Daniel Logan  
William H. Donner Foundation  
East Bay Zoological Society  
The Joseph and Marie Field Family  
Environmental Foundation  
Estate of Zoe Fotheringham  
Catherine Grellet  
Michelle and Joe Levy  
Joan MacKenzie  
The Maue-Kaye Foundation  
Susannah Rouse  
The Shifting Foundation  
Elizabeth Steele  
Stephen and Theresa Woo

### ECBB 2016 Conference: Vienna

Attending conferences may seem like a good job perk for scientists; glamorous travel to exotic locations. The reality is usually red-eye flights and hectic schedules, trying to catch one or two colleagues amongst hundreds of people. But for those of us working in the field these meetings are incredibly valuable. It's inspiring to hear about new work and ideas from colleagues and a chance to chat with prospective collaborators, and hear about new technology. While we love spending time with the elephants, spending time with other biologists lets us get our analytical minds in gear so that we can make sure ATE's science remains relevant. In July ATE's Resident Scientist Dr. Vicki Fishlock attended the European Conference on Behavioural Biology, held at the University of Vienna in Austria. Vicki connected with colleagues working in statistics, conservation, citizen science and animal cognition.

### Appreciation

We would like to thank Barny Trevelyan-Johnson for assistance with our website. We experienced some technical problems in June and luckily Barny stepped in and generously fixed the problem free of charge. Barny is a man of many talents; he runs a drone filming company called Highly Visual.



We are often asked what it takes to keep the Amboseli Elephant Research Program going for 44 years. The answer is that it takes the work of a few very dedicated people who fill a whole host of roles. We frequently write about the elephants, the research and the camp and sometimes mention the back-up office in Nairobi with Sylvi Nyambura and Celestine Mmboga keeping us going in the field and also overseeing our scholarship program. What we haven't written much about is the US office. Its function is as crucial to the project as anything that is done in Kenya.

Since creating the Amboseli Trust for Elephants in 2000, the US operations have been run by Executive Director, Betsy Swart. Betsy is visiting the project here in Kenya right now and so it seems like an appropriate time to write about the US office.

There are three main components to the work carried out there:

#### Program

- Outreach and public education to universities, high schools, grade schools, and community organizations for the purpose of teaching about the Amboseli project, elephants in general and the importance of conservation;
- Participating in coalition efforts concerning captive African elephants, especially welfare issues, campaigns against bull hooks, and investigating the condition of captive African elephants in zoos and circuses;
- Speaking with media and reporters about national and international elephant issues, especially about the urgent need to stop poaching and the trade in ivory;
- Attending national and international meetings, such as CITES.



*Betsy Swart visiting the ATE team and the elephants in August*

#### Development

- Meeting with donors and cultivating new donors for ATE;
- Advising donors about bequests, planned giving and other ways to leave a lifetime gift to the elephants;
- Organizing and hosting informational donor events;
- Liaising with the ATE Board of Directors and working with them on financial planning and goal-setting;
- Liaising with the boards of grant-giving foundations and providing updates to them about ATE's work;
- Creating accessible planned giving brochures and guides;



*Volunteer Amanda Alexander and Betsy with a stack of thank you letters for donors*

#### Administration

- Answering electronic and written correspondence;
- Receiving, processing, recording all donations and sending receipts to donors;
- Setting up informational tables and booths at environmental and conservation events;
- Mailing out orders for prints, wristbands, bumper stickers and other items available on web site;
- Printing, collating and

## Ways to Support Us

### Follow a Family in Amboseli with Elatia



Following the lives of an elephant family is endlessly fascinating. We wanted to share this experience with our supporters and so we started a program called Elatia. You can follow the lives of one or all five of Amboseli's Elatia families. For only \$30 per year you will receive regular updates of stories, photos and videos of your family.

To learn more about Elatia go to [This Link](#). If you have any problems, Tal has made a tutorial for signing up, [Click Here](#).

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### Name a Baby Elephant



A lucky donor just named this calf "Karla". You too can name one of the Amboseli calves.

Unlike our Elatia program where many people follow the same family, our naming program is a unique experience. The calf becomes "your" calf and yours alone and the name you give forms a part of the Amboseli dataset for all time. For more information write to us at [info@elephanttrust.org](mailto:info@elephanttrust.org).

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### iGive

One of the ways you can support ATE is by making your online purchases through iGive. If you sign up the Amboseli Trust for Elephants as your recipient organization we will get a small percentage of the sale. Connect with [iGive](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Give a Gift that Lasts Forever

Designate the Amboseli Trust for Elephants as a beneficiary of your will, individual retirement

- mailing Naming Packets for donors who name elephants;
- Creating products (wristbands, brochures) that promote the project and its goals. Working with printers and production agencies to see these products through to completion;
- Maintaining a database of donations and donors;
- Completing the annual non-profit audit to assure we maintain our 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt status.

As is evident, a huge amount of work is done in the US office and we in the field are immensely grateful for that support. Although there are many items on this list, Betsy strives to keep our administrative costs very low at only 10% of the budget. Fund raising takes up another 14% and all the rest goes into program work, including advocacy and conservation initiatives in both the US and Africa.

Forward to a Friend

## Sexing Elephants: It's Harder than You Think

ATE's Training Coordinator, Norah Njiraini, runs courses on how to study elephants for students, rangers and conservation managers throughout Africa. The first thing she teaches them is how to tell male and female elephants apart. It's not easy for people who haven't spent time with elephants but once the main characteristics are pointed out it's not difficult.

Elephant genitals are fairly well hidden by their legs so other features usually have to be used in a first assessment. Body size and shape are good indicators of sex for adult elephants. Both male and female elephants grow throughout their lifetime but female growth levels off at around 25 years of age while male growth continues steadily. By age 50 a male might be 12 to 13 feet at the shoulder and weigh six or seven tons. A female of the same age might reach 9 feet at the most and weigh three tons. Thus an elephant that towers over the others in a group is almost certainly a male.



*Female with angular head; breasts visible*

Body shape can also help. The underside between the front and back legs of males slopes up towards the front legs while in a female the underside is more parallel to the ground. From this side view, if the observer is close enough and the elephant isn't in long grass, the penis sheath may be visible in the male and in the female the breasts can be seen between and slightly behind the front

legs.

Calves are harder to sex especially those less than five years old. The best way to sex them is to view them from behind when the genital area can be seen. Once the calf is six or seven years old the tusks will help indicate which sex it is. Male tusks are thicker and more tapered while females' tusks tend to be more slender and more uniform in circumference down most of their length. By the time an elephant reaches 20 years the tusk differences between males and females are pronounced. The largest tusks ever recorded (from an elephant killed on the northern slopes of Kilimanjaro in the 1880s) were 224 pounds each while the largest female tusks were only 66 pounds.

A further helpful characteristic is head shape and this can be seen even in calves. When observed side-on males have rounded foreheads while females' heads are more pointed. In addition when males reach about

account, or life insurance policy.

To learn more about planned giving opportunities, please contact: **Betsy Swart** at [eswart@elephanttrust.org](mailto:eswart@elephanttrust.org); tel +1-508-783-8308.

25 their heads from the front view take on an hour-glass shape--wide between the eyes and tusks and narrow in between.

The second thing that Norah teaches the students is how to estimate the age of an elephant. In a recent short film that we made she explains how to sex and age elephants. [Click Here](#) to watch the film and learn some more about elephants.



*Male with rounded head; much thicker tusks*

[Visit our Website](#)

*As Phyllis and Betsy fight the good fight at CITES we will be keeping you updated via our Facebook page. It is expensive but very important to have our voices heard at this meeting. Any donations to support our efforts at CITES would be greatly appreciated.*

**Cynthia Moss**  
**Director**

