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Betsy Swart our Executive Director in the US keeps us going in so many ways...she asks

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New Director General of KWS

After nearly four years with an Acting Director, KWS has appointed a Director General of KWS. He is Kitili Mbathi, a former banker and Chairman of the Kenya Tourist Board. We at ATE are very pleased to have this highly qualified man at the helm of such an important conservation body. It is a very difficult job and we wish him well.

News from the Amboseli Trust for Elephants

March - April 2016

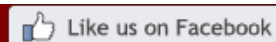
Greetings!

In my closing letter in the last newsletter I wrote that these were halcyon days in Amboseli with peace and plenty for the elephants. I should have known from long experience that it couldn't last. The last few weeks have seen tragedy in Amboseli for both people and wildlife. Five people have been killed by elephants; three young men, a boy, and an older man. This is far and away the most people killed in Amboseli in a short space of time in the 43 years we have been there. While the Maasai community and the elephants in the Amboseli ecosystem have been sharing this space throughout history in relative peace, these incidents highlight the future long-term problems of sharing one's homeland with wild animals.

While much media attention revolves around poaching, there is a looming and equally serious threat of loss of habitat due to human encroachment and development. The human population in Kenya is growing rapidly, and alongside this growth there is a mounting need for resources and development. This is an issue that we at ATE have been working on together with our partners over many years. We continue to seek solutions.

We would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to those families who have lost loved ones. We are also very sad to know that in retaliation for these human casualties, elephants have been attacked and killed too. We have lost at least eight elephants and several more have been injured in the areas where these incidents occurred. Unfortunately, this kind of retaliation only leads to elephants becoming frightened and aggressive, which in turns leads to more human injuries and deaths. At the same time, it is important to remember that it is because of the Maasai that we have a well-protected population of elephants in Amboseli. We will continue to work together with the Maasai community and our conservation partners to come up with long-term solutions to the challenges of co-existence.

Cynthia Moss
Director
Amboseli Trust for Elephants



Ivory Burn

On 30 April the President of Kenya and the President of Gabon lit the fires to burn 105 tons of ivory and 1.5 tons of rhino horn--the largest destruction of wildlife products ever. There were 11 pyres of tusks and a separate one for the rhino horn. Each pair of tusks and each rhino horn represented an individual who died in pain and terror or was lucky enough to die naturally. Each had his or her story and personality and history. It is something we should never forget.



Kitili Mbathi receiving ivory during the period of amnesty before the ivory burn on 30 April

Scholarship Girls

ATE's project administrator, Sylvi Nyambura travelled upcountry to visit two of our university students at Kabarak University. We had supported Mercy Kotikash and Evelyne Leyian all through high school and when they did well in their exams we sent them on to university. They are now in their second year. Here is Sylvi's report:



Mercy Kotikash, Sylvi Nyambura and Evelyne Leyian at Kabarak University

My visit to Kabarak was successful and it was nice meeting Mercy and Everlyne. I had a late lunch with them as I got to know them better. They took me on a school tour as we chatted away the afternoon. Both of them are bright girls with very different personalities. Everlyne is shy whereby Mercy is very outgoing and confident. By virtue of them being in a private University, and one that is of very high profile and strong discipline, I can only expect the best from them.

Thank You

A big thank you to our donors who keep us going in the field. Your contributions are so important to us.

Benevity Community Impact Fund
Chesbro Foundation
Margaret Helsel (in honor of Jo and Mo Williams)

The burn sent a clear message out to the world. Kenya will not use its wildlife in a consumptive way but rather cherish and glorify it as a living, breathing part of nature. To Kenyans elephants and rhinos are #WorthMoreAlive.



President Uhuru Kenyatta and President Ali Bongo pledged to end the trade in endangered species for all time.



Watch our films on [YouTube](#)

Still Doing Research...?

Phyllis C. Lee

The Amboseli Elephant Research Project is now in its 44th year so why after decades of research is it even more important for us to continue with our scientific studies? World-leading ecologists and evolutionary biologists reiterate that we only begin to understand the dynamics of changing ecosystems and populations when these are monitored over the very long term. Drivers of ecological change are not short term processes--responses can be short term such as the mass mortality we observed in the 2009 drought, but the consequences of this mortality will ripple through the population for a generation or longer. In elephant terms, that means watching events, behaviour and population processes for potentially two decades to come. If we want to conserve elephants throughout Africa, we will only be able to predict or model long-term consequences of short-term events (such as poaching) through very long-term studies.

Our science base is that of the individuals we track. It is this individual based approach that provides the "added value" for any long-term study. We can track individuals as they age, and explore how each male or female contributes to the

Elizabeth Ann Jackson
Mary Jane O'Loughlin
Susannah Rouse
Gail Steckley
Larry Strear
Strear Family Foundation

Ways to Support Us

Follow a Family in Amboseli with Elatia



In the photo above is the part of the AA family with Ann on the right and Alfre on the left with their calves. You could follow the AA family by joining Elatia, which costs only US\$30 per year for each elephant family. Your contribution helps fund ATE's on-the-ground expenses. As an Elatia member, you will benefit from exclusive information about your family.

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

Name a Baby Elephant



You can be a member of a small group of people who have become part of the Amboseli Elephant Research Project by naming one of the elephant 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, even after the elephant dies years later. For more information write to us at info@elephanttrust.org.

iGive

population structure. And we can quantify how each of our individuals contributes to the potential for the population to sustain itself (or to grow). We can determine the reproductive or population value of an individual and examine how natural selection affects populations. These are vital parameters for people developing evolutionary as well as conservation models.

But let's not limit ourselves to the ecological and conservation value of our

long-term study. Science is also about understanding cognition, communication and social engagement. Our research enables us to describe the importance of lifetime relationships for individuals, both males and females. We have been able to define aspects of individual behaviour - personality - that affect survival and success. Demonstrating the importance of long-lived individuals to maintaining social knowledge has come from the 43 years of the study. And we have found evidence of empathy, teaching and consolation as a result of watching individuals behave for decades - rare events, which would not be detected in short studies or in the absence of intrusive experiments.



Tabitha, matriarch of the TC family; we have followed her since her birth in 1976, through her childhood and young adolescence to the birth of her first calf in 1988 and all her subsequent calves and to the moment she became matriarch after her older sister died in 2011

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

20th Oakland Zoo Celebrating Elephants: Cynthia Moss

The Oakland Zoo has generously supported ATE for 20 years now. I couldn't possibly miss the 20th Anniversary so I will be giving the presentation this year. Join me if you can.

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 account, or life insurance policy. Your legacy gift will enable ATE to learn more about the fascinating and complex lives of elephants and to assure their future.

To learn more about planned giving opportunities, please contact:

Betsy Swart

at eswart@elephanttrust.org; tel +1-508-783-8308.

Newsletter Sign Up

To sign up a friend for our newsletter, please click [This Link](#).

Oakland Zoo's 20th Annual
Celebrating Elephants

20 YEARS OF ACTION FOR ELEPHANTS
MAY 21, EVENING GALA • MAY 28, DAY EVENT

Help celebrate twenty years of Oakland Zoo's Action for Elephants - fundraising for conservation, champions of welfare, and campaigning for protective legislation.

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 6:00pm – 9:00pm
Celebrating Elephants Gala, Presentation & Silent Auction
Marian Zimmer Auditorium, Oakland Zoo
Sliding Scale Donation: \$40 – \$100

A SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY AMBOSELI TRUST FOR ELEPHANTS
Our guest speaker Cynthia Moss, Founder, Director and Trustee of Amboseli Trust for Elephants began studying elephants in Kenya in 1966 and has led the longest on-going study of elephants in the world. Most of what we know about elephants has come from this amazing project which has also been the foundation of elephant conservation.

Doors Open 6:00 pm
Presentation 6:30 pm
Reception and Silent Auction 7:30 pm

Tickets available at the door or in advance at: celebratingelephantsgala2016.eventbrite.com

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 10:00am – 3:00pm
Celebrating Elephants Day
Oakland Zoo
(Included with general Zoo admission)

Experience the once-a-year opportunity to tour the elephant barn and see an elephant up close. Family friendly activities include holding an eleven pound elephant tooth, stepping into an elephant foot print and making special treats for the Zoo's elephants. Come for a day of adventure and leave knowing you helped protect elephants in the wild!

ELEPHANT BARN TOURS: \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids under 10 years of age. Tickets available at the Zoo on event day or in advance at: celebratingelephantsbarnstours2016.eventbrite.com

TOUR SCHEDULE: 10:30am, 11:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm

CIRCUS FINELLI: An animal free circus
PERFORMING 12:00pm and 2:00pm

All funds raised during the two events will support the Amboseli Trust for Elephants. For more information visit www.oaklandzoo.org and click on Conservation.

SUPPORT ELEPHANTS
Donate items or gift certificates for May 21 silent auction (\$25 minimum value).
*Deadline for donations is May 14.
Contact Genny Greene: genny@oaklandzoo.org

Action for Wildlife
OAKLAND ZOO

KPIX

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Visit our [Website](#)

New Book on Studying Forest Elephants

Before Vicki Fishlock came to work in Amboseli she did her PhD on forest elephants in the Republic of Congo. She is the lead editor of a recently published book on how to study forest elephants. It is fascinating. The challenges are so different from what we face in the savannahs.



An ivory burn is a very sad event. It is like a funeral. Looking at all those pairs of tusks representing hundreds of elephants gone from this Earth is heartbreaking. We pledge to do everything in our power to make sure that in the future only tusks from elephants who died naturally will end up in the stockpiles. You can help us achieve this goal by supporting our work.

Cynthia Moss

