



A ROCHA KENYA'S NEWSLETTER

Nature conserved, people transformed

ISSUE 08—April 2016

Nurturing Children into Conservation

There is need for the young children who are growing up to be educated on the environment so as to cultivate a positive curiosity that will drive them to conserve and protect their environment. Barlow, in *Confluence of Streams*, puts it nicely: “children are born with a sense of wonder and an affinity for nature. Properly cultivated, these values can turn into ecological literacy, and eventually into sustainable patterns of living.”

The previous year saw, A Rocha Kenya conduct environmental education lessons in various primary and secondary schools. This led them visit a number around the Watamu Marine National Park, those adjacent to Dakatcha woodland and Arabuko Sokoke Forest, and finally some in Nairobi. This year we have bolstered our efforts regarding the school outreach program. Thus, we have embarked on an ambitious plan where we aim to introduce birding into the environmental clubs which we normally conduct the lessons to, in different schools bordering Arabuko Sokoke Forest.



In addition, we are developing a marine environmental education manual accompanied by several workshops for the club patrons of the schools adjacent to the Watamu Marine National Park in order to encourage more awareness about the conservation of marine biodiversity which is seldom covered.

Furthermore, a quick glance at our national base- Karara Field Study

Center, in Karen, Nairobi, will clearly indicate the replication of the same efforts being put in environmental education as at the Coast, with various schools constantly benefiting from this. Our hope is to see more schools covered and eco-trips to Karara nature trails becoming the norm.

This year we have so far reached out to a total of 621 pupils, with the lessons covering subjects that include: ornithology, forests, marine ecology and sustainable development.

All in all, we have now fully gotten immersed in our work, oozing an aura of an unwavering spirit ready to tackle the rest of the year and see the next generation take action after knowing the significance and consequences of caring for their environment.



Thinking Globally but Acting Locally– United in Conservation

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expired at the end of last year and now everyone is trying to embrace the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are more globally collaborative and inclusive compared to MDGs and therefore more promising. You move to a seminar room and write MDG or SDG, everyone starts thinking of the United Nations and other big multinational organizations. Here at A Rocha Kenya, we have been working to demystify this and appreciate the potential that all of us, whether young or old, have to help achieve these goals by thinking globally but acting locally.

Young People on the Global Stage (YPGS) is a project that engages students and teachers to address some of these Sustainable Development Goals and in Nairobi; A Rocha Kenya (ARK) has been working with three secondary schools as part of the project. February 2016, the project study visit took place and the ARK Nairobi team was delighted to host teachers from the UK, Spain and The Gambia for this event.

The main aim of the study visit was to exchange ideas, share experiences and knowledge on sustainable development Issues and to hold a workshop towards resource development and a final communiqué by the young people. Over the duration of the week, the visitors together with the ARK team embarked on day trip activities and meetings in a bid to facilitate collaborative learning. The multicultural perspectives ensured unlimited conversations and sessions on sustainable development.

The remainder of the week was a series of trips to other organizations engaged in sustainable development. This included a visit to the Giraffe Centre, New Life Home Trust baby rescue centre, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), Dagoretti Special School, Marula Studios and Tangaza University College. We also had a chance to visit Kibera slums to see the challenges faced by residents and how they try to overcome those challenges. It was interesting to note that the population of Kibera is bigger than the population of The Gambia!

The culmination of the week was the teachers' workshop, which involved teachers from all four countries, along with ARK staff, coming together to produce teaching materials on three major themes: Poverty and Wealth, Hunger and Food Production and Sustainable Development. At the end of the session we were given the task of completing, over the next few months, resources which can be used cross culturally with sections specific to the curriculums of each participating country.



The trip to Tana Delta; The unforgettable experience! As put by Tim Currie (Science and conservation volunteer February 2016)



On 9th of February our ARK team of four, set out on the journey to the Tana Delta for the annual water bird count. We drove north from Watamu for about 4hours, reaching the end of the road mid-afternoon. There, we boarded a small boat that took us down the river to the lodge where we were to stay for our two nights, right on the mouth of the river. It was really an amazing experience, travelling

by boat through beautiful mangroves and sand dunes to reach our destination. On our arrival, we quickly put our bags down, grabbed our binoculars and headed for the beach to see what birds we could count before sundown. This was my very first time conducting a bird count, and I quickly saw how knowledgeable and experienced Kirao, Juma, and Albert were as I watched them identify and count

the different species we saw with ease.

Day two saw us count Great and Cattle egrets, White-faced and Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Open-billed Storks, Black-crowned Night Herons, Pied Kingfishers and Water Thicknees in hundreds. Not to mention the endless number of Spur-winged Plovers! There seemed to be a pair or flock of them around every corner we turned. Other great sightings we had that day included Long-toed Lapwing, African Darter, Goliath Heron, Little Bittern, Glossy Ibis, Collared Pratincole, and African Skimmer. We even came across a very large group of hippos, watching us curiously as we peered at some birds through our scope.

Our last morning came with lots of high hopes as we wade through the mangrove channels of the salt water areas in the delta. This took us through more mangrove areas and even out onto some mudflats. Like the day before, there was no shortage of birds for us to count. Terek Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Grey Plover and many more were seen in abundance over the course of the morning. We even managed to spot a Western Reef Egret, a very uncommon species at the coast! After all this fun, we rushed back to the lodge and grabbed our things before taking the long drive back down to Watamu, thus concluding an extremely successful trip to the Tana Delta.

Strategic Management of Intertidal zones



People and nature are interlinked. We have always been dependent and interacted with the environment for centuries, obtaining both economic and ecological benefits. Within the marine environments, the intertidal zone stands out as among the areas with the most interaction with humans and human activities. While the other habitats are very vital providing fishing grounds and sea routes, the intertidal zone is where all the action begins. The zone is easily accessible for multiple human uses, such as intertidal fisheries harvesting, harbor and recreational activities. These areas have been endowed

with rich diversity of species that contribute to the provision of these ecological and economic benefits. However when it comes to their management, the coin turns and they seldom receive the same attention. The multiple human uses and their location at the transition between the land and the sea suggest that, these areas might be facing more pressure originating from both the sea and land. A closer look around, points to probably a higher rate of declining biodiversity in these areas than other areas due to overexploitation of resources, pollution and other natural pressure such as the rising sea level. This calls for urgent relook at the management of strategies currently being used in these areas.

The ARK marine team will be studying some of these issues and try to suggest management measures for the Intertidal zone of Watamu Marine National Park and reserve. Join us as we seek to better understand this zone in one of the oldest marine protected areas in the world.

EXPLORING CHICKEN REARING-an income generating project for ASSETS

It is exactly 15 years since the birth of our ASSETS programme in 2001. The journey has not been easy ensuring that the promise we made back then is fulfilled. The ASSETS Eco-bursaries have been coming from our esteemed donors and proceeds from our Eco-tourism projects in Mida Creek and Gede Ruins.

ASSETS, which has stood the test of time, has been able to disburse scholarships to many bright and needy students that come from the villages adjacent to Arabuko Sokoke Forest, amidst difficult years for the tourism industry since most of the funds are sourced from the ecotourism facilities at Mida Creek and Gede Ruins.

It is due to all these that we thought it right for some time now that we think of another finance generating project that will keep us going. Though it may not bring a lot of returns in this near future we are certain that it will surely help in the future.

Chicken rearing is the project we embarked on beginning this year. It's not only about paying for bursaries, but also a platform where the community can come and learn how to rear local chickens in their homesteads as a way to transform poachers of bush meat into chicken



farmers.

In pictures



One of our outdoor Bandas, we call it 'The Sarova Stanley'



Bird watching in Arabuko Sokoke Forest during a nature walk



Our Mwamba Restaurant



A Rocha Kenya Marine researcher, Peter Musembi conducting coral reef monitoring



A ROCHA KENYA NEWSLETTER

Nature conserved, people transformed

ISSUE 08—April 2016

Our Field Study Centers

As we continue to work – in our research, community and education programs - to see ‘nature conserved and lives transformed’, we, at A Rocha Kenya, also provide simple, pleasant and relaxed full board accommodation for all interested visitors, researchers and conservationists and offers opportunities for volunteers to get involved at our Mwamba Field Study Centre, which also offers conference facilities for workshops and seminars. It is an active research centre with good food, off the beautiful white beach of Watamu. Our Nairobi centre, Karara, also plays a major part in working with schools on ‘sustainable development’ by involving them in conservation agriculture with a nursery of indigenous trees and an educational nature trail.



ARK Friends scheme

- Individual-ksh 500 per year
- Family - ksh 1000 per year
- Institutional– ksh 2000 per year
- Group - ksh 3000 per year
- Corporate - ksh 5000 per year

Friends of A Rocha Kenya

Join/Renew Membership via

- Select payment services 
- Select buy goods
- Enter till number 665950
- Enter your pin, confirm details and press ok.

SUPPORT US!

DONATE

Support A Rocha Kenya Programs on:

www.arocha.org

Support our ASSETS Scholarships Program by making a donation on:

https://my.give.net/arochakenya_assets

HOLIDAY

stay at Mwamba Field Study Centre, Book with us on:

mwamba@arocha.org

FUN-TIME

Visit our Eco-facilities:-

Karara Nature Trails

Mida Creek Board-walk

Gede Ruins Tree Platform

VOLUNTEER

Volunteer with us, apply at

mwamba@arocha.org

Our Blogs

<http://assets.wildlifedirect.org/>

<http://arochakenya.wildlifedirect.org/>

Face book : A Rocha Kenya

WRITE TO US:

A Rocha Kenya

P.O.Box 24630-00502

Karen, Nairobi or

P.O.Box 383-80202,

Watamu

Email: kenya@arocha.org, Tel:+254(0)20 233

In partnership with



National Committee of The Netherlands

