

# IN THE FIELD

## NOVEMBER AT A GLIMPSE

Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup>	FoCP Nature Walk
Nov 7 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Bird Walk
Nov 14 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Bird Walk
Nov 17 <sup>th</sup>	FoCP Nature Walk
Nov 18 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday Bird Watch
Nov 21 <sup>st</sup>	Morning Bird Walk/ Public Lecture
Nov 28 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Bird Walk

Bird ringing every Tuesday morning (check with Ornithology section, National Museums).

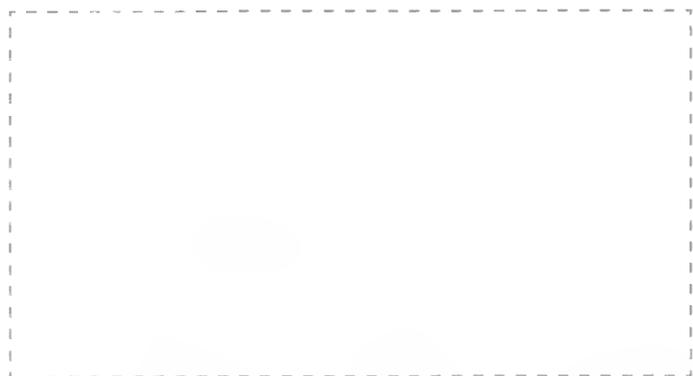
**Birders Please Note!** The Wednesday Morning Birdwalks meet at 8:30 am at the Nairobi National Museum. Transport is on a self-help basis. The group meets in the courtyard of the Nairobi National Museum, past the entrance to the galleries. We normally return at about 12:30 pm.

The Sunday Birdwatch on the THIRD Sunday of each month now also meets at 8:30 am, at the same location. It is a day trip; please bring water and lunch.

**Mombasa Birdwalks** On the 3rd Saturday of each month. For meeting time and place, please contact Taibali Hamzali <thamzali@gmail.com> / 0733-980540; or Doris Schaule <dorischaule@gmail.com> / 0722-277752. Or check Facebook page: <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FFJmombasa/>>

Contact the office for information on other birdwalks in Kakamega, Kisumu, and other sites

**Ngong Forest walks** - 1st and 3rd Saturday at 9.00 am. Contact Simon 0729-840715



## Eburu Forest Day Trip 8<sup>th</sup> December 2018



**ACTIVITIES**  
Hiking,  
Nature walk,  
Bird watching

**COST PER PERSON: Ksh. 3,000**  
Cost Includes transport in a safari vehicle, guide fees, 1 Ltr drinking water, conservancy fees (citizens only) Non-citizen to pay Ksh. 400/- extra

For Enquiry & BOOKING Contact Norman on: 0739 200 216  
[news@naturekenya.org](mailto:news@naturekenya.org)

## NEW MEMBERS

Nature Kenya (the EANHS) would like to welcome the following members to the East Africa Natural History Society:

### CORPORATE

Sentinel Africa Consulting

### FAMILY

Christine Nyairo  
Tracey Bell  
Keziah Kamau  
Bilha Nyambura  
Gabriel Oduori  
Takahashi Mami  
Geoffrey Kijogi  
Christine Mbithi  
Thomas Obare  
Sabina Kamau  
Ephantus Karinja  
James Macharia

### INDIVIDUAL

Jolien Abrams  
Apostolos Andrikopoulos  
Nicholas Njuguna  
Edith Kamindo  
Oscar Simanto  
Franklin Kinoti  
Lydia Olielo  
Joshua Weru

### STUDENT

Joyce Kariuki  
Ian Ruraya  
Mary Mwangi



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Yes! Start my **NatureKenya** membership

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### MEMBERSHIP TYPES

<i>Ksh Per Year</i>	
Full	2,000
Sponsor	6,000
Family	2,800
Student	1,200
Schools, Clubs	1,500
Corporates	20,000 -30,000



### JOIN/RENEW MEMBERSHIP

- Select 'Lipa na Mpesa'
- Select 'Pay Bill'
- Enter business number 100300
- Enter account number (put your lapsed membership number or write new member)
- Enter the amount, enter your PIN
- Confirm details & press OK

For details on associated groups such as Youth Committee, Succulenta, and Friends of Nairobi Arboretum, City Park or Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, contact [office@naturekenya.org](mailto:office@naturekenya.org)



## Community forest scouts to boost patrols in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest



PHOTO BY FRANCIS KAGEMA

The newly recruited community forest scouts.

BY FRANCIS KAGEMA

Surveillance and patrol efforts in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest are set to be enhanced following the recruitment of 12 community forest scouts. The new scouts from Gede community forest association (CFA) recently concluded a two-week community forest scouting course held at the Arabuko Jamii Villas. The training was facilitated by officers from Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). Topics covered included basic intelligence and investigation, information gathering and reporting, dendrology, flora and fauna identification, law enforcement among others. The trained scouts will supplement patrols by KFS rangers in the forest. Additionally, the scouts will double up as guides for visitors visiting the forest. Plans are underway to recruit more scouts from Sokoke and Jilore CFAs. Provision for community forest scouts is part of the participatory forest management plan implementation. The presence of the scouts, it is hoped, will deter illegal forest activities.

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest is a treasure trove of biodiversity. The 420 square kilometer forest, designated as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA), is a tiny representation of the coastal lowland forest that once stretched from southern Somalia to Mozambique. It is the largest existing fragment of the historic forest.

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest is rich in rare wildlife. Six

taxa of butterflies endemic to the East African coast can be found there, as well as the rare, near endemic Golden-rumped Sengi (Elephant-shrew). There is also a population of the African Elephant. The Endangered birds Clarke's Weaver, Sokoke Scops Owl, Sokoke Pipit and Amani Sunbird are resident in the forest. More than 230 bird species have been recorded in Arabuko-Sokoke forest, including 25 of Kenya's 30 African East Coast biome species.

Since its gazettement in 1932, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest has survived different regimes of management, evolving over time. The forest's rich biodiversity has shown remarkable resilience, remaining more or less unchanged although its relative abundance keeps adjusting to the changing ecological equilibriums.

The connection between Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and the adjacent community is as old as the earliest known human settlement in the coastal region. The Watha people have occupied that coastal lowland forest for centuries and are believed to be the original inhabitants of the area, practicing a hunter gatherer culture in the forest and the savannah to the west. Their numbers and system of resource extraction was not a threat to biodiversity but instead a way of keeping ecological balance between species.

Rapid human population growth around the remaining coastal forest patches in the late

20th century, coupled with agro-based culture and urbanization, has driven demand for forest resources to an all-time high. Forests can no longer cope with the rate of extraction of both timber and non-timber forest products. The government's 'strong arm' approach to forest protection, prior to the introduction of participatory forest management in 2005, did not manage to keep away poachers. Forests have continued to lose resources and biodiversity is almost always compromised.

In Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, resource extraction has been shown to correspond to a decline in the population of key species. That is the primary reason why management of the forest has legally become a responsibility of government institutions led by KFS and forest adjacent communities through their community forest associations (CFAs).

Nature Kenya, through funding from NABU (the BirdLife partner in Germany) has continued to support improvement of local capacity through diversification of skills for communities living adjacent to the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. The NABU funded project has contributed to the implementation of the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Elephant Conservation Action Plan.

"The People Partner with Nature Program" developed by BirdLife Denmark (DOF) together with three BirdLife partners including Nature Kenya, is also underway in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. The Program's long-term objective is to reduce the depletion of forested Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and contribute to the best and most sustainable forest management practices for the benefit of all. The program is funded by DANIDA via the Danish umbrella NGO/training organization, Civil Society in Development (CISU). 🐦



PHOTO BY JOHN MWACHARO

The Sokoke Scops owl

# ACTION

## BIRD MIGRATION

### Migratory birds come calling in Nairobi



PHOTO BY EDWYN ANDERTON

A Garden warbler

BY PETER MUREITHI

October saw the arrival of a number of migratory birds in Nairobi. On Tuesday 9th, during a bird ringing session at the Nairobi National Museum grounds, a Garden warbler was caught and ringed by ringers from the Ornithology Section, Zoology Department, National Museums of Kenya. That is, a thin aluminium band with the words "Inform Museum Nairobi" was put on the bird's leg. Then the Garden warbler was released. The band or "ring" does not harm the bird, and if it's found again, it will tell us something about its travels.

According to Wikipedia, the Garden warbler breeds in most of Europe and in western Asia. All Garden warbler populations are migratory, wintering in sub-Saharan Africa as far south as South Africa. When Garden warblers cross the Sahara, they fly at night, resting motionless and without feeding in suitable shade during the day. During their journey, they can metabolise not only body fat but also up to 19% of their breast and leg muscles and 39% of their digestive tract. Many birds pause for a few days to feed after the desert crossing before continuing further south.

Throughout the years, another migrant from the North, Willow warblers, are in Nairobi in good numbers between October and May. This year very few Willow warblers have been reported so far, but two were seen on the Wednesday Morning Birdwalk at the Ngong Racecourse on October 10th.

The Spotted Flycatcher, another well-known migratory bird, was observed at the Museum and on the Sunday Birdwatch in mid-October. Flocks of Eurasian Bee-eaters and Barn Swallows have been reported from different parts of Kenya since early September.

The birds face many threats during their migratory journeys. These include collision with wind energy turbines, tall buildings and electric power lines; and being caught for food in southern Europe and North Africa. Loss of habitat also poses a serious threat to the birds' survival.

This year, the World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated in both May and October. A time to remember the incredible journeys made by these small birds!

## NATURE CHAMPIONS

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are now part of a new, broader definition of sites critically important for the conservation of biodiversity: Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs). All 67 IBAs in Kenya qualify as KBAs. Local environmental groups play a key role in protecting Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) when they become a site support group (SSG).

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Adjacent Dwellers Association (ASFADA) is the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest KBA site support group (SSG). Established in 2009, the group is an umbrella organization made up of over 600 people living in 52 villages around the forest. Its membership is drawn from the three Community Forest Associations (CFAs), namely Gede, Jilore and Sokoke. The CFAs are made up of Village Development Forest Conservation Committees which draw membership from forest user groups. Representation right from grassroot level ensures that all levels of user groups are well represented.

ASFADA owns and manages Arabuko Jamii Villas; the facility comprises of five bandas, a Swahili house and a conference hall. Food can be provided. The facility is ideal for researchers, scientists, bird watchers and other parties interested in studying the unique biodiversity of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. Other activities ASFADA is engaged in include butterfly farming, bee keeping, eco-tourism, tree planting, among others. The group also carries out advocacy and environmental education.

The Arabuko-Sokoke Forest has a management team which is responsible for management of the forest, with AFSADA representing the community. Other members of the forest management team include Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Museums of Kenya (NMK) and Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI).

### Visting Arabuko-Sokoke Forest?

Contact AFSADA:

info@arabukojamiivillas.com

or arabukojamiivillas@gmail.com

Mobile: +254 725 109846

Website: http://arabukojamiivillas.com/



## GLOBAL CONSERVATION

### World meets to champion biodiversity

For 12 days starting November 17th, the United Nations will call on decision makers from more than 190 countries to step up efforts to halt the biodiversity loss and protect the ecosystems that support food and water security and health for billions of people. The UN Biodiversity Conference (14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity – COP 14) will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

The UN Biodiversity Conference is the governing body of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and advances implementation of the Convention through the decisions it takes at its periodic meetings.

In addition, on the margins of the UN Biodiversity Conference, pledges and commitments in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 will be made by governments, business, NGOs and intergovernmental organisations, cities and subnational authorities, indigenous peoples and local communities, youth and civil society.

Nature Kenya Executive Director Dr. Paul Matiku will be in attendance as part of the Kenyan delegation to the conference.

Source: Grocott's Mail <http://www.grocotts.co.za>

For updates visit [www.naturekenya.org](http://www.naturekenya.org)

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## Spotted at ARABUKO-SOKOKE



The Spotted Ground Thrush was photographed in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest by Mustafa Adamjee on October 14. There were several birds, and it was the first observation this year! The birds were on their way back to their nesting grounds in central Africa.

## A comet is coming!

BY FLEUR NG'WENO

### Planets, Oct '18

A comet is a ball of ice and dust that orbits the sun. Comets are smaller than planets, and have long elliptical orbits, traveling far from the sun, then briefly passing close to the sun. As the comet approaches the sun, some of the ice turns to water vapor. The water vapor and dust form a "coma" around the comet and may form a long "tail" streaming away from the sun.

Most comets are seen through telescopes. But Comet 46P/Wirtanen, now on its way, may be bright enough to see with the unaided eye in December! Comets travel slowly through the skies, so they can be seen for several days.

Comet 46P/Wirtanen is now in the southern sky. The thawing ice and dust form a green, blurred haze around it. It is traveling towards the constellation Taurus the Bull. In mid-December it may be seen near the Pleiades and Hyades star clusters. Check the internet for updates.

### Planets Nov '18

Bright Jupiter is sinking towards the western horizon, while little Mercury rises above it. Mercury is above the sunset and close to the reddish star Antares for most of November. Golden Saturn sets during the evening, and Mars is still quite bright, high overhead at sunset. The slender crescent moon is near Jupiter on November 8, near Mercury on the 9th. Waxing wider, the moon is very close to Saturn on the 11th, and near Mars on Nov 15 and 16.

In the morning sky, brilliant Venus appears over the sunrise before dawn and rises rapidly. Venus is close to the bright star Spica for most of November. The waning crescent moon is near Venus on December 3.

### November stars

High overhead, four stars form the corners of the Great Square of Pegasus, the flying horse of the ancient Greeks. Low in the northeast, the constellation Cassiopeia is a group of bright stars in the shape of a letter "M". If you missed it in October, look for a hazy, blurry spot of light between these two constellations. This is the Great Spiral Nebula M31 in the constellation of Andromeda.

In the south, the bright star Fomalhaut is high, and the bright star Achernar below it. You can look for the Small and Large Magellanic Clouds below Achernar. These cloud-like areas are small galaxies, composed of millions of stars.

The Pleiades or Seven Sisters – a cluster of bright stars close together – are rising in the east. Below the Pleiades, a group of stars form a cone-like shape, the Hyades cluster, in the constellation of Taurus the Bull. The bright, reddish star Aldebaran is at one end of the cone. On Nov 23, the full moon will be close to Aldebaran.

### Moon Nov '18

Nov 7 – new moon. Nov 15 – first 1/4. Nov 23 – full moon. Nov 30 – last 1/4. ☾

**LAUNCHING**  
**NOV 9TH**

AT THE NAIROBI NATIONAL MUSEUM

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