



CHAMPIONS OF THE FLYWAY SPECIAL EVENT FOR SAFARI COMPANIES in KENYA & TANZANIA

VULTURE AMBASSADORS: BUILD STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR CLIENTS AND WITH VULTURES (NATURE'S SAFARI GUIDES)

This event is to raise awareness of the extinction crisis facing Africa's vultures, and to twin safari companies in the Rift Valley with [Champions of the Flyway's](#) global campaign raising money for a rapid response system to wildlife poisoning that is driving the collapse of vulture populations.

WHEN: Tuesday 26TH MARCH: In the field event for clients, guides, lodge managers
AND
18 APRIL (TBC): Prize-giving Vulture Ambassadors event, Arusha (venue TBA)

WHERE: Anywhere that your company operates in Kenya and Tanzania, especially the Mara-Serengeti

WHO: All companies operating in either or both countries are eligible

HOW:

- On 26th March – the same day Champions of the Flyway bird race takes place in Israel - engage clients with the core message about vulture extinction and the key facts on the attached flier (please print and have in the vehicle on the day)
- Engage clients in one or more of the following activities:
 - Count all the vultures you see on the day and keep a record of it
 - Make short, fun videos with your clients saying "Go Vultures" – here's some [ideas](#) to get your creative juices flowing
 - Describe how vultures lead you to a cool wildlife experience on the day
- Share the results of your activities on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using #GoVultures hashtag and the @flywaychampions address. To enter the prize draw for best video, highest vulture count, and best vulture-guided wildlife experience story, you MUST include your company name and guide/lodge manager name. Large videos can be submitted to communication@naturekenya.org using [WeTransfer](#)
- The Champions of the Flyway team will review all submissions and award prizes for each category.
- On 18 April, from 2-4pm (TBC), all guides and company staff are invited to a FREE Vulture Ambassador event. Prizes will be awarded to the winners of the March 26 activities. Actions being taken to tackle the vulture crisis will be profiled. Donations to the rapid response to poisoning system in the Mara will be strongly encouraged. And we will have an open dialogue on how the safari industry can help even more.



Key Messages:

- Africa's vultures are barreling towards extinction faster than almost any other animal group. Five species have lost >90% of their populations in the last 30 years.
- The main driver is poisoning, with electrocution or collision (with powerlines), and traditional or superstitious use of body parts (including their brains – because they are highly intelligent), playing a smaller role.
- The poisoning occurs for two reasons: i) human-wildlife conflict, especially loss of livestock to predators; and ii) poaching – vultures are nature's clean-up crew, they discover animal carcasses quickly, in turn tipping off anti-poaching units, helping them track and apprehend poaching gangs. The gangs respond by poisoning the carcasses to kill nature's whistle blowers. One poisoned carcass can kill 500 vultures, which explains the speed at which they are disappearing.
- It's not just vultures suffering, populations of many animals are impacted by poisoning here in Africa's Rift Valley and savannahs, from lions to migratory birds, with massive implications for ecosystems and human wellbeing.
- Asia's vulture populations crashed during the 1990s and 2000s, for different reasons. That loss of vultures is estimated to have cost India \$34 billion dollars, and 50,000 people's lives (through a huge increase in rabies). Here in Africa, vultures prevent the spread of other diseases including Anthrax, Tuberculosis and Brucellosis. The human and financial cost is mounting.
- The reason we're focusing on vultures today is because March 26th is race day in Israel, and the conclusion of a major global awareness and fundraising campaign, to support a new, effective system of rapid response to poisoning in and around the Mara in Kenya. The bird race is just like the Arusha Big Birding Day, only global.
- If you would like to donate, you can do so by going to <http://www.champions-of-the-flyway.com/2019-teams/> and choosing a team to donate. We recommend the crazy Canadians, #Team Canucks! But the other way you can help is simply by spreading the word. Take a look at this emotive [video](#) and the August 2018 National Geographic Magazine [exposé](#) of the issue.