



Community tree nursery at Kessup forest , Cherangani. Photo courtesy of Kessup CFA

Growing trees in Cherangani for livelihoods and resilient ecosystem services

■ By James Mutunga

Growing trees to restore forested landscapes has a positive impact on biodiversity, ecosystem resilience, and local livelihoods. In 2015, Africa set an ambitious goal of restoring 100 million hectares by 2030, with the Kenyan government committing to restoring 5.1 million hectares. To implement this goal, [TerraFund for AFR100](#) was established in 2021. The consortium, consisting of World Resources Institute, One Tree Planted, Realize Impact, and Barka Fund, is determined to provide the necessary financing and support to local communities involved in land restoration.

In 2021, TerraFund provided grants to 100 projects and enterprises from 27 African countries, including 14 from Kenya. Two years later, TerraFund began a new financing phase to restore three important African landscapes: the Lake Kivu and Rusizi River Basin spanning Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the

Great Rift Valley of Kenya; and the Ghana Cocoa Belt. This new cohort of 92 beneficiaries, which includes 78 non-profit and 14 for-profit organizations, will receive \$17.8 million. The investment is projected to grow 12.7 million trees, restore 47,000 hectares of land, create 52,000 jobs, and benefit 586,000 people by 2030.

In Kenya, 36 organizations, including Nature Kenya, made it to the final selection, including 29 non-profit and 7 for-profit. These Kenyan restoration champions will receive \$7.5 million in investment. This investment is projected to grow 4.5 million trees, put 13,000 hectares of land under restoration, create 21,000 jobs, and improve the livelihoods of 245,000 people.

Nature Kenya, with the support of TerraFund, is growing over 400,000 indigenous trees in six state forests in Cherangani Hills. This community-led initiative will employ 4,000 local people and restore 320 hectares of forest land, while providing tree

nursery skills to 150 volunteers. The project will impact more than 17,000 people directly and indirectly over six years.

Collaboration among indigenous communities, local

government agencies, civil society organizations, and private investors is essential to restore the Cherangani Hills Key Biodiversity Area (KBA). This will ensure the continued provision of goods and services by nature. A partnership between the government and the people will help create an enabling environment for the preservation and protection of natural heritage. This will alleviate poverty, mitigate the effects of climate change, and enhance the resilience of natural systems and communities.

Cherangani Hills KBA is a vital area in the Rift Valley region, spanning three counties. It is home to endangered biodiversity and plays a crucial role in supporting food security, flood disaster control, climate change mitigation, water provision and conservation, and other critical services. Threats to the KBA stem from several human-driven pressures as a result of rapid population growth and the increasing incidence of poverty, which

Contd. pg. 2

114TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

DATE: Wednesday 15th May 2024

TIME: Barbecue at 12 noon; AGM 1pm to 2pm

VENUE: Louis Leakey Hall, Nairobi National Museum; and via Zoom

The Agenda

1. Minutes of the 113th Annual General Meeting
2. Matters arising from the Minutes
3. Chairman's Report
4. Honorary Treasurer's Report
5. Appointment of Auditor
6. Any other business of which due notice in the form of the Resolution to be proposed has been given to the Honorary Secretary, signed by not less than 2 members, not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting.
7. Election of Office Bearers, Members of the Executive Committee and Trustees. (Nomination forms for officers or members of the Executive Committee are available from nkmembership@naturekenya.org)
8. Library, Journal, Committees and Projects Report

To confirm your attendance, please go to the link below:

<https://forms.gle/Ns8UJzkjmcXhyBLz5>

To register for the virtual (Zoom) version, go to the link below:

<https://bit.ly/3vLRxJA>

Growing trees in Cherangani for livelihoods and resilient ecosystem services *contd.*

has triggered encroachment into the forests for settlements, farming, timber, charcoal, firewood and grazing. Forest management is affected by changing lifestyles among local communities, notably the adoption of crop farming by pastoral communities. Faced with high incidences of livestock loss because of persistent drought and cattle rustling, pastoralists have turned to crop farming including farming in the forests. The ecosystem has similarly suffered from the impacts of the changing climate, which has intensified livestock grazing in the forests due to the loss of pasture because of the increased recurrence of drought.

In the past ten years, forest degradation has resulted in adverse effects on the goods and services people get from the forest. Water quantity and quality have been deteriorating. Capacity for flood regulation within the landscape has declined, associated with incidences of soil erosion and deadly landslides. A degraded forest ecosystem affects human health, which is dependent on good air quality, climate regulation, water storage and availability, fertile soils, and diverse wildlife. Degradation continues to decimate the resiliency and ability of the Cherangani ecosystem to provide the natural services that provide the ambience needed by humans. 🌿



Members Murguiywet CBO at a restoration site in North Nandi Forest and Chapin's Flycatcher (inset). Photos by David Odhiambo and Nik Borrow



strategies is needed to address these threats. Collaboration between government agencies, non-profit organizations, local communities, and international partners is essential to safeguarding the area's ecological integrity. To guide the management of the forest, the North and South Nandi Forests Strategic Ecosystem Management Plan 2015-2040 was launched in 2015.

KBA in focus - North Nandi Forest

By Joshua Sese

Nestled within Nandi County's vast landscape is North Nandi Forest Key Biodiversity Area, an ecological gem consisting of diverse habitats, ranging from montane forests merging to western forests as well as grasslands, supporting characteristic fauna and flora. North Nandi forest is sandwiched between Kakamega and South Nandi forests KBAs to the west and south respectively. Its elevation ranges from 1700 to 2130 meters above sea level, providing a varied terrain, and it is a source of permanent tributaries flowing downstream to form rivers such as the Yala River draining into Lake Victoria. The forest is home to the globally threatened Chapin's Flycatcher (*Fraseria lendu*) and supports a rich

tapestry of plant life, including rare orchids, towering trees, and colourful flowering plants, creating a haven for countless species of insects, amphibians, and small mammals.

North Nandi KBA faces numerous threats, however. Poverty in surrounding communities, planned deforestation for development needs, and unsustainable activities such as illegal logging, charcoal burning, encroachment, and fragmentation pose significant challenges to the integrity of the ecosystem. Climate change also poses a looming threat to the KBA, altering temperature and precipitation patterns.

A multi-faceted approach combining conservation efforts, community engagement, and sustainable development

In efforts to foster community-led conservation efforts, a community-based organization (CBO), Murguiywet CBO launched in 2010 has been at the forefront in spearheading the restoration work. The group is one of Nature Kenya's Site Support Groups that participates in activities such as beekeeping, tree nursery and tree growing, bird monitoring, conservation of water catchment areas and riverine restoration, community awareness on the importance of conserving North Nandi Forest, world environmental days, environmental education, reporting encroachment cases by the community to local authorities, capacity building, and recruitment of local community scouts to patrol the forest. 🌿

For updates visit www.naturekenya.org

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Promoting beekeeping to catalyse economic growth in the Tana Delta

By Fatuma Hajio

In the heart of Kenya's Tana Delta region, The Tana Green Heart project, led by the Tana River County Government in collaboration with Nature Kenya seeks to enhance biodiversity protection, promote conservation-linked enterprises and develop green value chains. Beekeeping is one of the enterprises the project is promoting to boost community livelihoods and sustainably harness the Delta's natural bounty. Recognising Tana Delta's beekeeping potential, African Beekeepers Limited (ABL), a Nairobi-based private beekeeping company, is keen on investing in the honey value chain.

ABL has set sight in Tana Delta. The company, working closely with Nature Kenya, seeks to equip local beekeeping groups with the requisite knowledge and skills to enhance honey production and elevate quality standards. Towards

this end, ABL offered training to 317 individuals, most of them women, at seven locations in Tana Delta in April. Through hands-on training sessions, conducted by ABL staff, participants learned theoretical beekeeping concepts and practical knowledge tailored to their local needs.

Plans are underway to train 1,200 active beekeepers representing 30 groups in the coming weeks. The ripple effects of this initiative are poised to resonate far beyond the buzzing hives. With the onset of the rains, the timing couldn't be more perfect. As the landscape rejuvenates and flora blooms, honey production is set to increase, promising a bountiful harvest for the newly trained beekeepers. This natural cycle will further enhance the region's economic prospects as the honey industry increasingly becomes lucrative. 🐝



Beekeeping training session conducted by African Beekeepers Limited (ABL) staff in a village in Tana River Delta. Photo by Hassan Golo

May Sky Watching

By Fleur Ng'weno

In late April and most of May, the Earth passes through dust particles left by the famous Halley's Comet, forming the Eta-Aquarid meteor shower. When a bit of dust or rock from space falls into the Earth's atmosphere, it burns up, forming a bright trail of light. The bright light is called

a meteor – also a 'shooting star' or 'burning spear'. Best viewing is from midnight to dawn on May 5, 6, 7 from a dark location. This month, the brilliant planets Venus and Jupiter are out of sight by night. The waning moon appears near the planet Saturn on May 3 and 31.

INSECT COMMITTEE OF NATURE KENYA

DUDU WALK

SAT 4 MAY

10AM - 12.30PM

Join our Dudu Walk at the **Nairobi National Museum Grounds** and get to encounter, identify and learn more about insects!

www.discoverpollinators.org

Tree Walk

By Nature Kenya
Plants Committee

Venue: National Museums of Kenya
Meet at Nairobi Museum main gate

Date: Friday 31st May Time: 9:00 AM

Contact: 0780 149200 or 0726 006283

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Birding Updates

Wednesday Morning Bird walks in Nairobi.

In case of heavy rain on Wednesday morning, we will visit the Nairobi National Museum.

1st May – City Park. Meet at 8:30 am at the parking near the Coca-Cola Kiosk. Directions: Coming from the City centre, take Limuru Road past Aga Khan Hospital. Make a U-turn at Total Energies Petrol Station, Limuru Road. Drive back along Limuru Road and turn left onto City Park Road next to City Park Market. There is a parking fee of Ksh. 300 for those with cars, payable via Mpesa.

8th May – Karen Blixen Museum. Meet at 8:30 am in the Museum's Car Park area. Directions: Coming from the city centre, take Ngong Road towards Karen. Turn left at Shell Petrol Station onto Karen Road. The Museum is about 1.5 km after Karen Country Club.

15th May – Museum Grounds/Michuki Memorial Park. Meet at 8:00 am in the open space in front of the entrance to the museum galleries.

22nd May - Oloolua Nature Trail, Institute of Primate Research, Karen. Meet at 8:30 am at the Nature Trail's main entrance. Directions: Coming from the city centre, take Ngong Road towards Karen. Turn left at Shell Petrol Station onto Karen Road. The Nature Trail is about 500m after Karen Blixen Museum. There is an entrance fee of **Ksh. 100** per adult and **Ksh. 50** per child for Nature Kenya members payable via eCitizen. (bring your membership card – soft or hard copy).

29th May – Paradise Lost. Meet at Paradise Lost Main Gate at 8:30 am. Directions: Take Kiambu Road. Turn Left at Paradise Lost junction in Thindigua after Runda Greens before Quick Mart Supermarket. Turn right at Kencom Apartments just after Kasarini Primary School. It's about 500m to the main gate. Thanks to the management for welcoming the birdwalk.

19th May. Sunday Birdwatch - Lukenya Hill. Meet at 8:30 am at the Lukenya Schools turn off. Directions: Coming from City Centre, take Mombasa Road towards Machakos Junction. Turn left at the Lukenya Schools sign post before Maanzoni Lodge. Proof of membership is required (bring your membership card – soft or hard

copy). Bring snacks and drinking water. Thanks to Mountain Club of Kenya for welcoming the bird watch.

If you have questions, please write <news@naturekenya.org> or phone 0780-149200.

Bird Ringing at Nairobi National Museum grounds usually takes place on Tuesday mornings. Please confirm with Titus Imboma <Imbomati911@gmail.com> Phone 0721-649452.

There is a WhatsApp group for those who often attend the Wednesday bird walks, and another for those who take part in bird ringing. If you would like to be in either group, please write <news@naturekenya.org> or phone **0780-149200**

Malindi Birding Updates

2nd May – Buntwani Sea front. Meet at 4:00pm at the Malindi Museum near Nature Kenya Membership Office.

9th May – Malindi Museum grounds. Meet at 4:00 pm at the Malindi Museum near Nature Kenya Membership Office.

16th May – Mtangani via Afya Hospital. Meet at 4:00 pm at Malindi Museum near Nature Kenya Membership Office.

23rd May – Malindi Harbor. Meet at 4:00 pm at Malindi Museum near the Nature Kenya Membership Office.

30th May - Mayungu. Meet at 4:00 pm at the Malindi Museum near Nature Kenya Membership Office.

25th May. Saturday Birdwatch – Sabaki River Estuary. Meet at 7:00am at Malindi Museum near Nature Kenya Membership Office. Thanks to the Sabaki River Conservation and Development Organization for welcoming the bird walk.

For more information, email: <malindimembers@naturekenya.org > or phone 0725 223042.

Mombasa Bird walks are held the 3rd Saturday of each month. To check meeting time and place, check Facebook page:

<<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FFJmombasa/>>

Or contact: Taibali Hamzali <thamzali@gmail.com> / 0733-980540 or Kelvin Mazera <klvnrua@yahoo.com> / 0720-928783

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CornellLab
GLOBAL BIG DAY
11 May 2024



Capped Wheatear
Oenanthe pileolata
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For details on associated groups such as Youth Committee, Succulenta, Mammal Committee and Friends of Nairobi Arboretum or City Park, contact office@naturekenya.org