



MIGRATIONS

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS FROM THE AFRICAN BUSH & BEYOND

Dear Friends and Fellow Travelers,

This summer has been very busy for us, both in Montana and Africa. It is a rare moment when all three of us are back in the office and we are taking the time to plan some exciting new trips in Africa and in the Greater Yellowstone region. Kayhan and Farley have been working out logistics and the perfect "sites" for a western Safari Invitational. In fact, Kayhan just took a couple of

Kayhan has just returned from Africa where he was a guide and escort on four different safaris. He scouted out some remote and interesting new places in Kenya (please see page 5 for a description of one of the interesting tribes he encountered in Kenya) and everyone had a wonderful time on his walking safari in Zambia. He also spent considerable time in Kenya working on our conservation and

Africa on the shores of Lake Eyasi and see the great migration in the Serengeti. Please see page 2 for a detailed description of this rare Tanzania safari. After the Tanzania trip, Farley will be leading another trip in Kenya into the remote deserts and mountains of Kenya's Northern Frontier District and into the Masai Mara where I have a small cottage. The Kenya trip is now almost full and will be limited to just ten people. If you are interested in either of these special trips please give Farley a call to see if there is still space. (406) - 294 - 9430.

Earlier this year I led a group of friends on a most enjoyable safari in Kenya, visiting many of my favorite places, including the Masai Mara, where I introduced everyone to our conservation projects. Their response was incredibly generous for which I am very grateful. Lindsay Wagner, a very exceptional 14 year old, returned home and organized fund raising for the Maasai schools with her class mates from the Far Hills Country Day School and the Peck School, NJ. This type of commitment and generosity from American students is so impressive and inspirational.

Please think of us for any of your travel plans. This year we have had happy travellers in several African countries and around the globe, including Peru and the Galapagos Islands, our western trips in the U.S., and in Europe.



days to do some fishing and hiking around Yellowstone. He saw three grizzlies, coyotes, eagles, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope and heard elk bugling. We are so blessed to be able to come off an African safari and then escape into the mountains of our own backyard full of grizzlies and wolves. This time of year is particularly beautiful and winter is the best for viewing wolves. Please remember that we now offer our services to organize western trips of any type, from dude ranches to guided fishing or hiking trips.

community projects in the Masai Mara. Please see page 4 for a current update of how the project in the Masai Mara is progressing.

This year much of Jim's family will be traveling with us in Kenya over New Year's to some of our favorite places. After this trip, Farley will be heading to Tanzania to reconnoiter an exciting "off the beaten path" safari to hike in two rarely visited volcanic craters near the famous Ngorongoro Crater, visit the Hadzabe tribe, who are a relict bushman tribe from southern

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Tanzania Explorer

January 12 - 24, 2003

An opportunity to experience the elephants of Tarangire, the Bushmen of Lake Eyasi, game viewing in UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti National Park during the great annual migration of 2.5 million amals. For details please see our website and enter the password "craters".

Tanzania is one of the most famous wildlife viewing areas in the world and yet still there are hidden gems that few people have even heard of yet alone seen. This safari will be an active exploratory trip utilizing traditional large mobile tented camps and the luxury of two small permanent tented camps – often called “country homes under canvas”. We hope to introduce you to a part of Africa that few people have had the privilege of visiting and provide you with memories to draw from and share for years to come.

We will begin in Tarangire National Park, which is famous for some of the largest herds of elephant in Africa - Cynthia Moss identified over 500 individual elephants in one week! The park is also filled with twisted and scarred baobab trees. These prehistoric looking trees have been aged to over 3,000 years and are called the tree of life by many African tribes. Both ani-

mals and humans depend on baobabs for survival as they are a source of food, water and shelter. In Tarangire, we will be staying at Swala, a small permanent tented camp, which is nestled beneath the canopy of large *Tortilis acacia* trees in a secluded corner of the park. The camp is literally full of game, with elephants and lions often seen right in camp – game drives are often not even necessary.

Our travels will take us far off the typical tourist route to the Rift Valley and the shimmering soda waters of Lake Eyasi. Here our private mobile camp will await us, set amidst the *Borassus* palms on the lakeshore. The highlight of this area will be when we venture out on foot for the day with a tracker to find the Hadzabe Bushmen. The Hadzabe speak a language that is heavy with click-sounds, similar to that of the Kalahari Bushmen. They are a relict tribe and are now only found in small family groups with a total population of around 200 in the Eyasi basin. The bow and arrow is their livelihood and with

luck, they will teach us how they make their bows and gather the poison from nearby trees for the arrow tips. The baobab trees are a tremendous resource for them and are even a source for honey to which they are guided by a small bird that has developed a mutualistic relationship with these people. The Hadzabe live entirely off the bush and to see this nearly forgotten culture is indeed a privilege.

After leaving the Lake Eyasi region, we head to the Ngorongoro Crater which is one of the most spectacular game viewing destinations on earth. The Crater is a perfectly formed sunken caldera with 2000 foot high walls and inhabited by as wide a cross-section of wildlife as lives on the entire African continent. It is truly a sight to behold! We will sleep in a small shared mobile camp on the Crater rim.



From the Crater, we head across the Maasai lands of the Ngorongoro Hills to meet back up with our mobile camp, which will serve as our base camp for our daily explorations into the rarely visited Olmoti and the 10,700 foot high Empakai Craters. Most of these explorations will be on foot, as the crater floors are not accessible by vehicle. The lake on the floor of the Empakai Crater attracts flamingos from the other Rift Valley breeding grounds as they escape the heat of the day in the cool and lush atmosphere of Empakai.

From Maasai land, we then head to the kopje studded plains of the famed Serengeti National Park. For the next three nights, we will stay at Kusini, a small permanent tented camp, located on a small rock kopje





in a remote and rarely frequented part of the Serengeti. This camp is in the prime game viewing area for this time of year from which we will hopefully be able to see the awe-inspiring Migration. The endless plains can be dotted with animals as far as the eye can see – the numbers are in the millions and it truly is an unbelievable sight. We will immerse ourselves in this spectacle becoming surrounded by wildebeest and other plains game as we search for predators. The Serengeti is especially well known for cheetah and lion, which frequent the plains.

The experiences you will have on this adventure will be enduring and perhaps even life-changing. Whether your memories are filled with your first sighting of a wild elephant, something learned from the Hadzabe, or the camaraderie around the campfire at night with the sounds of the wild all around you – Africa is an experience filled with sights, sounds and smells that will stay with you forever.



Kenya Explorer

The cost (not including international airfare) is \$8732.00 per person in shared accommodations with a \$700.00 single person supplement.



February 1 - 14, 2003

The safari will begin in the famed northern region of Kenya known as the Northern Frontier District (NFD) where we will walk alongside a camel caravan, accompanied by a staff of traditional Samburu and a wonderful guide, Helen Douglas Dufresne, who has spent much of her life in this region. We will most likely not encounter any other people except the occasional nomadic tribesman as we are far off the tourist path. This area is renowned for its vast scenery and while there are animals, they are shy and can be quite difficult to see. Each day we will leave camp in the morning and walk approximately 4 - 10 miles to the next campsite following the scenic Matthews and Ndoto mountain ranges that rise 9,000 feet out of the desert. The land is wild, remote, and virtually untouched, with shy animals and endless views.

After the camel trek, we will spend a few days at one of my favorite spots in all of Africa – Borana. It is owned and managed by friends of ours and is just lovely – each room has sweeping views and private baths, verandahs, and even a fireplace. The food is wonderful so you will be happy you just did all that walking! Here you have the option of horseback riding, walking, going on game drives, visiting a nearby village, or simply relaxing by the pool.

We then go to Elephant Watch Camp which is a new camp in the Samburu region owned by the famed elephant researchers - Iain and Oria Douglas-Hamilton – situated near their elephant research station. Here, in addition to more traditional game drives and walks, we will have the opportunity to accompany researchers while they study these fascinating creatures.

The trip ends in the Masai Mara at a tented camp called Kichwa Tembo which is where Mum has a little cottage and spends much of her time. It is also where our community based conservation project is located, so hopefully we can see this project in action. The Mara has unbelievable game viewing (probably the best in all of Africa) and the scenery is beyond compare.

This trip will introduce you to all sides of safari life and you will hopefully leave with a greater knowledge and understanding of the African bush and perhaps even yourself.

This trip is limited to a maximum of 10 people and currently 7 have signed up. For a detailed itinerary, please look on the website under Special Invitations and select Kenya Explorer, password “explore”, or contact Farley at (406)-294-9430 or farley@aktaylor.com.





COMMUNITY BASED CONSERVATION

It has been a challenging yet rewarding first half of the year for us. Due to the poor economy in Kenya after September 11th, we did not receive the donation of a 4x4 vehicle that had been pledged. This meant that we had less operating money to conduct our 2-week long antipoaching sweeps. We thank the Born Free Foundation, Governor's, Olonana, Kichwa Tembo, and many individual donors for their support. With your help we expanded our programs into seven schools, totaling over 1,500 students. We supply these schools with textbooks, sports equipment, water tanks and education materials. We urge you to please support our work to help the school children of this region and to protect the valuable resources of the Masai Mara.



This summer Kayhan and our local team were able to complete two antipoaching sweeps with good results, as well as coordinate the rescue of three giraffe and one lion. He especially enjoyed his time in the Maasai schools working with a client and friend of ours Christina Morin. Christina, now a sophomore in college, has a particular interest in art and with Kayhan conducted water color classes for several days - working with over 300 children who had never before seen a brush or paints. These paintings are beautiful and depict the wildlife of the region. Below is one of the students' paintings.



Over 65% of our funding comes from private donations. For more information please look on our website. If you wish to assist us with any of the following needs please send tax deductible donations to: **Friends of Conservation**
Ref: Anne K. Taylor Fund
2724 Arvin Road
Billings, MT 59102

ANTIPOACHING

Each 2-week project costs \$3,000.00, (half of this is the vehicle expenses). We also need a set of radios for \$1,500.00.

WILDLIFE RESCUES

We assist with about six animal rescues each year. The cost for one rescue is \$250.00 for a lion, \$500.00 for a giraffe and \$1,000.00 for an elephant. Vet drugs cost \$2,000.00 a year.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

It costs \$2,000.00 to build 3 classrooms, to install a water catchment system for drinking water is \$1,500.00, to purchase textbooks for 300 students costs \$1,000.00, to install 20 desks \$500.00.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM LEADER



One of the major challenges facing conservation efforts in the Mara, as is the case all over Kenya, is the widespread negative attitudes towards wildlife. Wild animals, to the average Kenyan, are still a threat having destroyed life and property for generations. Conservation is mostly seen as a foreign concept and the appreciation of wildlife a tourist luxury. To change this attitude, the AKTF desnaring team has done community education around the reserve.

remains one of Kenya's largest sources of foreign exchange. However, only if the money accrued from wildlife is used for the benefit of the people, will wildlife conservation be viewed as a valid form of land use. The bush meat trade is having a profound and unsustainable impact upon Africa's wildlife populations. If we do not respond vigorously to the bush meat crisis, most of our endangered wildlife will be extinct within the next two decades. Tourism alone cannot secure the future for wildlife.

In itself, tourism is a very fragile and notoriously fickle industry. Following terrorism at the world trade center, Kenya saw a marked drop in visitors and revenue. With dwindling revenue came substantial cuts to field budgets within our reserves and parks. If the members of the developed world value these places and wildlife, how much are they prepared to pay to safeguard places like the Masai Mara? Antipoaching patrols would be much more effective with vehicles and better surveillance equipment. Greater funding is needed for education programs and community support projects in the vicinity of the Mara. All conservation groups should unite to raise funds and search for solutions in cooperation with the reserve authorities and the communities living with wildlife. This is beginning to happen. We can only hope that it is in time and pray that the collaboration will be fruitful. *Evanson J. Kariuki*
Anne K. Taylor Fund -




The Pokot Tribe of Northern Kenya

On a recent trip in Kenya, we visited the Pokot people. It is always interesting to learn the differences and similarities of the various cultures. Kenya has wonderful tribal diversity and in just a two-week trip, numerous tribes can be encountered depending on how



adventurous a trip one is willing to take. The Pokot are a rarely visited tribe that few people know much about. Their history is difficult to fol-

low as they seem to be related to the Nilo-hamitic people from the far north and the Bantu people from Central Africa. Traditionally, the Pokot led a mostly nomadic way of life that brought them into contact with many of the other tribes in the region such as the Turkana and Karamojong. Over time they have adopted the customs of and have intermarried with these other tribes. Some of the Pokot are farmers, but many are pastoralists using cows as their main form of currency. Wealth is measured by the number of cows one owns and specifically relates to bride wealth. Polygamy is acceptable if a man has enough cows to acquire a second wife. Initiation ceremonies are done in age groups for young men between the ages of 15-20, after which they are allowed to marry and take part in community decisions. For women,

circumcision is performed around the age of 12, after which the young woman can be married. Women wear necklaces to identify their marital status and also adorn their bodies with scarification. The Pokot believe in a God called Tororot who they worship at ceremonies and dances. Medicine men also play a significant role and sorcery is used for protection from evils. Elders are offered great respect in a community and given full funeral services while the bodies of the young that die are left out for the hyenas and vultures. 



'Many unknown little patches and corners still exist in the dark continent for the would be explorer who wishes to break new ground. It has long been one of my favorite recreations to sit with the map of Africa before me and plan out exploring expeditions...' C.H. Stigand, *To Abyssinia through an Unknown Land*

Even in one of these corners there is always something new and interesting to learn. As much as we like watching the charismatic mega fauna in Africa, we often find the

challenge of searching for the less frequently seen small mammals very rewarding. During our work in the Masai Mara while at Anne's cottage, we regularly receive visits from the nocturnal silver galago (or bush baby), which is a cute black coated primate with a large bushy tail. Sometimes a family of marsh mongoose runs along the nearby stream searching for in-

sects and crustaceans. If we are lucky, we may even catch a glimpse of the elegant spotted genet cat (see picture to left). The marsh mongoose is a highly capable hunter and stories even suggest that it can use its' own body as a lure to catch birds. The same has been suggested for the larger white-tailed mongoose. Kayhan startled one at night and it ran through an open doorway where it then became stuck. When Kayhan went to investigate, it made a loud growling sound and rushed the door, successfully making Kayhan step aside to allow its escape. Another rare sighting was an aardwolf, with the body of a small dog and a striped golden coat; they are highly specialized to eat termites and can consume more than 40,000 termites in a few hours. We frequently get visited by a large pack of 30 banded mon-

gooses that are diurnal (active during the day) and move quickly searching for insects, spiders, and lizards. While foraging, they emit a chattering call to maintain contact with each other. Finally, there are a couple of animals that we have not yet been able to identify or clearly understand why they are found so far from their "known" distribution. Anne saw what she is sure was a giant naked mole rat run across the grass in front of her cottage. They represent one of the few highly social mammals which exhibit a division of labor (as in bees and termites). Their colonies are governed through chemical mechanisms with the dominant female generating pheromones that suppress sexual development and growth in other females who become workers for the colony after weaning. There is still so much that we don't know it is always fascinating to see a new creature. 