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MONTHLY PROGRAMME ACTIVITY REPORT

JUNE 2014

SUMMARY

Details and highlights of this month's report are:

- Drills for field scouts
- Tree planting and reforestation
- The Joint Wildlife Protection Team
- Marania Wildlife Guards
- The Horse Patrol Team
- The Elephant Corridor

The report covers MKT activities for the period 31st May to 30th June 2014. Reports were provided by the following employees: Humphrey Munene¹ on *Tree planting and reforestation* initiatives. Northern sector reports were provided by the following; the *Marania Wildlife Guards*²; the *Horse Patrol Team*³, the *Elephant Corridor Team*⁴ as well as the northern area supervisor⁵ on interrelated aspects as well as security updates. Ruthumbi Forest sector updates were consolidated by the *Joint Wildlife Protection Team*⁶ led by Edwin Kinyanjui Ngure. The June 2014 report was compiled by Maurice Nyaligu⁷.

¹ Humphrey Munene is the Trust's field coordinator

² The Marania wildlife guards is a team comprised of Elijah Kipsang, Julius Mutuma Kalonga, Joseph Gitonga, Paul Kithinji and Henry Mutwiri

³ The Horse patrol team comprises of Joseph Michubu, Pius Mutuma, Samuel Gikunda Japhet and Martin Murugu Gachienja

⁴ The Elephant Corridor Team comprises of Robert Murega, Charles Gitonga, Mari Weru and Jasper Muthuri

⁵ Mr. Maurice Thure serves as the Northern Sector Supervisor

⁶ JWPT is composed of Edwin Kinyanjui Ngure, Dominic Gitonga, Charles Nyaga, George Mwenda, and Francis Wachira.

⁷ Mr. Nyaligu is the Trust's Programme Officer

1. INTRODUCTION

This June, the following field activities, related outcomes, discoveries, interventions, and incidents were noted by field and secretariat staff.

Interventions

- Tree planting and reforestation activities.

Discoveries and observations

- Elephant mortality (natural)
- Illegal logging activities in the National Reserve
- Snares, poacher signs, poacher hideouts and related incidents
- Other illegal activities in the National Reserve including, grazing and charcoal burning
- Other wildlife related mortalities and observations
- Arrests and apprehensions.

Activities

- Drills for field based scouts.

1.1 Programme patrol and field activity intervention sites (June 2014)

Project activity areas patrolled by field based teams this June:

- *Elephant Corridor Team* - Elephant Corridor and the immediate Corridor precincts⁷
- *Marania Wildlife Guards* - Mlima Dinga, Upper Corridor, Mlima Nyeusi, Rutundu, Daraja ya Charlie, Uwanja ya Dyer and Marania Forest
- *Horse Patrol Team (HPT)* - Marania River, Mlima Ngaita, Solo Camp area, Emburi Forest, Karuri Forest, and Wangu /Emburi farm boundary area
- *Joint Wildlife Protection Team (JWPT)* - Ruthumbi area and parts of immediate adjoining vicinity
- *Tree planting and fencing initiatives* - Karuri area of the Ontulili forest block
- *Drills* - Kisima Farm Airstrip.

2. PROJECT UPDATES

2.1 Tree planting and reforestation activities

More seedlings are expected to be nurtured by the Gatinka Tumaini Women Group in readiness for the next planting season in the Karuri area of Ontulili Forest block later this year. This follows a site visit by the Trust's field coordinator and relocation to a new expansive tree planting site by group members. The area has been allocated by the KFS to the women group at an annual subsidized yearly rent of Kshs. 2,500. MKT's support to this group includes provision of fencing materials, the purchase of tree nursery equipment and a water tank. This expansive nursery area will be used ostensibly towards raising seedlings supported through an annual donation by Safarilink⁸. Group members gathered and relocated all scattered tree seedlings to the new site using the



⁸ Safarilink (a private charter flight company) has been a dedicated supporter of the Mount Kenya Trust for a significant period now.

Trust’s field vehicle. The Trust’s field coordinator also used the occasion to present group members with a cheque for the previous planting season work.

2.2 Field training for scouts

As part of ongoing capacity building efforts, all field based MKT teams underwent a day’s drill exercise and training at the Kisima Farm Airstrip on the 6th of June. The training was geared at making the consolidated MKT team active whenever they are on patrols and also instill discipline, cohesion and respect amongst team members. It also served as an occasion to interact and exchange experiences and lessons learnt by members of the various teams. The training was facilitated in-house by MKT and conducted by the Trust’s northern sector supervisor, Mr. Maurice Thure who has a background from the Kenya Police force. The more recent recruits and younger members of the teams found the exercise particularly useful. Similar exercises are planned for later in the year.



2.3 Elephant mortality incidents

At least one Elephant (*Loxodonta africana africana*)⁹ was found to have died of natural causes on the northern section of Mount Kenya this June. The discovery was made following intelligence leads by members of the public on the 11th of June. The Marania Wildlife Guards, received information of an Elephant carcass in the lower Mlima Dinga Area. The male Elephant was estimated at 45-50 years and was found while team members were patrolling the area from Rutundu to Marania at about 1630hrs. The carcass was fresh and the cause of death was natural; the carcass lay on the fringes of a flowing stream. KWS Marania field station were immediately contacted and managed to mobilize a team and retrieve the tusks each weighing 41Kg.



2.4 Illegal logging within the National Reserve /Forest Reserve

The above incidents were recorded by the Elephant Corridor Team and the JWPT this June. These cases are tabulated in chronological order below:

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
1.	7 th June 1538hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	Two Podo (<i>Podocarpus falcatus</i>) trees found milled for timber use using a chain saw. Three arrests made (see arrests)	S 00.17267°; E 037.56237°	

⁹ Species naming and nomenclature throughout this report is consistent with the IUCN SSC guidelines (see www.iucnredlist.org)

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
2.	10 th June 1000hrs	Lower Corridor	Elephant Corridor Team	An MKT fencer discovers two (2) Red Cedar (<i>Juniperus procera</i>) logs cut using a chain saw	-	
	10 th June 1536hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	While on patrol, the JWPT found a Red Cedar tree cut down with a chain saw. Sections of the logs had already been sawed into beams	S 00.13619 ^o , E 037.56490 ^o	
	10 th June 1557hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	Team members discover a Red Cedar chopped down for suspected use as fencing posts within the Bamboo (<i>Arundinaria alpina</i>) zone	S 00.13609 ^o , E 037.55971 ^o	
	10 th June 1643hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	The JWPT discover a Podo tree chopped down using a chain saw	-	
	10 th June 1651hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	Two (2) Podo trees found cut using a chain saw and the timber ferried. 100 pieces found left behind	S 00.12869 ^o , E 037.54716 ^o	

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
3.	13 th June 1030hrs	Kamiti Corridor	Elephant Corridor Team	Ten (10) Eucalyptus (<i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>) found chopped along several waypoints	37N 0330692, UTM 0014398; 37N 0330887, UTM 0014398; 37N 0330499, UTM 0014903	
4.	19 th June 1509hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	Members of the JWPT discover an illegally logged Olea (<i>Olea africana</i>) tree cut using a chain saw	S 00.01041 ^o , E 037.49833 ^o	

2.5 Snares, dog and poacher signs, caves and hideouts

Poaching related incidents including snaring were reported by all three field patrol teams this June. These incidents are tabulated below:

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	PARTICULARS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
1.	2 nd June 0921hrs	Marania River	Horse Patrol Team	HPT members observe one lame Common Eland (<i>Tragelaphus oryx</i>) limping on the back right leg while grazing	37N 0325331, UTM 0006849	
2.	3 rd June 0728hrs	Mlima Ngaita	Horse Patrol Team	One lame Zebra (<i>Equus quagga</i>) observed in a herd of twenty two (22) grazing animals	37N 0324255, UTM 0005237	

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	PARTICULARS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
3.	8 th June 1000hrs	Solo Camp Area	Horse Patrol Team	One (1) lame Zebra observed limping in a herd of fifteen (15) grazing animals	N 00.02147 ^o , E 037.23979 ^o	
4.	9 th June 1240hrs	Emburi and Karuri Forest	Horse Patrol Team	One (1) medium sized snare targeting Waterbuck (<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>) and /or Red Duiker (<i>Cephalophus barveyi</i>) found and immobilized	N 00.01884 ^o , E 037.21872 ^o	
5.	10 th June 1127hrs	Mlima Nyeusi	Marania Wildlife Guards	The guards discover a cave where suspected illegal forest intruders cook bushmeat	S 00.00203 ^o , E 037.24859 ^o	
6.	16 th June 1222hrs	Daraja ya Charlie	Marania Wildlife Guards	A suspected poacher hideout discovered by team members during patrol	N 00.01099 ^o , E 037.25081 ^o	
7.	19 th June 1213hrs	Uwanja wa Dyer	Marania Wildlife Guards	Five (5) human footprints and several dog prints discovered along a trail south west towards Solo Camp area	N 00.01680 ^o , E 037.24662 ^o	

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	PARTICULARS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
	19 th June 1343hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	While on patrol, team members find and immobilize one (1) disused old snare	S 00.03095 ^o , E 037.51716 ^o	
	19 th June 1502hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	An old abandoned makeshift hut suspected to be in use by illegal loggers found and destroyed by the JWPT	S 00.01138 ^o , E 037.49972 ^o	
8.	21 st June 1411hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	Close to the moorland, the JWPT discover a hideout used by illegal forest intruders to roast meat	S 00.01825 ^o , E 037.53769 ^o	
	21 st June 1411hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	A medium sized nylon snare is discovered and destroyed by team members during patrol	S 00.01825 ^o , E 037.53769 ^o	
9.	25 th June 0928hrs	Emburi farm boundary	Horse Patrol Team	One (1) wire snare discovered along Emburi farm boundary targeting Waterbuck and /or Red Duiker	N 00.02905 ^o , E 037.22551 ^o	
10.	26 th June 0914hrs	Mlima Ngaita	Horse Patrol Team	One (1) lame Zebra observed feeding in a grazing herd of thirty (30)	N 00.02996 ^o , E 037.24177 ^o	

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	PARTICULARS	BEARINGS	PHOTO
11.	27 th June 0925hrs	Mlima Ngaita	Horse Patrol Team	Human and dog prints observed by the HPT while crossing Solo Camp road from Wangu to Kimbo forest	N 00.02759°, E037.24510°	
	27 th June 0942hrs	Mlima Ngaita	Horse Patrol Team	One (1) lame Zebra observed limping in a herd of ten (10); limp thought to be as a consequence of snares	N 00.02513°, E037.24943°	
12.	29 th June 1031hrs	Solo Camp Area	Horse Patrol Team	A suspected poacher dog found deep in the forest significantly emaciated due to hunger. Team rescues the dog	N 00.02628°, E 037.245551°	

2.6 Illegal grazing, illegal collection of grass and illegal charcoal kilns within the National Reserve

These incidents are tabulated below:

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	BEARING S	PHOTO	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS
1.	2 nd June 1411hrs	Mlima Dinga	Marania Wildlife Guards	37N 0330233, UTM 0002686		While patrolling, the guards encounter rampant charcoal burning in lower Dinga area mostly of Wild Olive. Four (4) charcoal kilns identified and destroyed
2.	3 rd June 1503hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	-		JWPT team members discover and immobilize an old charcoal kiln

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	BEARING S	PHOTO	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS
3.	11 th June 0815hrs	Lower Corridor	Elephant Corridor Team	37N 0328375, UTM 0014997 37N 0328725, UTM 0015199		The Corridor fencing team encounter an area where grass is frequently harvested within the Corridor
4.	19 th June 1509hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	S 00.01041 ⁰ , E 037.49833 ⁰		The JWPT discover an abandoned charcoal kiln estimated at two (2) weeks old
5.	24 th June 1231hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	S 00.00375 ⁰ , E 037.51489 ⁰		Six (6) donkeys, twenty (20) sheep and fourteen (14) cows found grazing in an open field by team members. No KFS documentation available
6.	24 th June 1330hrs	Ruthumbi	Joint Wildlife Protection Team	S 00.01540 ⁰ , E 037.51101 ⁰		Team members discover eighteen (18) sheep, and five (5) cows feeding in an open grass field without a grazing permit

2.7 Other wildlife related mortalities and animal observations

The table below chronicles information relating to the above subject:

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	BEARINGS	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS	PHOTO
1.	5 th June 1113hrs	Corridor (Marania)	Marania Wildlife Guards	N 00.08107 ⁰ , E 037.27902 ⁰	MKT guards discover an underground tunnel suspected to be in use by elephants within the Corridor	
2.	21 st June 0903hrs	Marania Forest	Marania Wildlife Guards	N 00.03754 ⁰ , E 037.27270 ⁰	A salt lick used by elephants discovered by MKT scouts during patrol	

#	DATE & TIME	AREA	TEAM	BEARINGS	OBSERVATIONS /REMARKS	PHOTO
3.	28 th June 0915hrs	Emburi Forest	Horse Patrol Team	N 00.03108 ^o , E 037.25217 ^o	Team members discover the carcass of a Colobus monkey (<i>Colobus guereza ssp. kikuyuensis</i>). The cause of death could not immediately be established, however sections of the body had been dismembered	

2.8 Arrests and apprehensions

The following is a chronology of an arrest made this June:

Three (3) logging suspects: Mbijiwe Kanampiu, Charles Mwirigi M'Irithe and Samson Muriuki Mbui were on the 7th of June arrested while in the process of milling timber from illegally logged Podo (*Podocarpus spp.*) trees within the protected area of the National Reserve. The JWPT handed them over to Nkubu Police station where charges were conferred on the three OB: No. 41/07/06/2014. Exhibits relating to the crime were also presented to the Police including a chain saw, 2 jerricans full of petrol, a jerrican of oil and two (2) Podo beams.

