

# nature net

The Nature Kenya Newsletter www.naturekenya.org Dec04/Jan05

## TALKS AND VIDEOS

The perfect Christmas gift -

Tickets for the screening of the 2002 **Oscar Nominee: Best Documentary Feature**

### Winged Migration

**Monday 14 February 05**  
6:30 p.m.  
(85 mins)

**Louis Leakey Hall, Nairobi Museum**

Tickets @ 350/-

Pre-christmas purchase @ 300/-

'Fly along with the world's most gorgeous birds' in a 'film of staggering beauty'. Explore the mysteries of birds in flight as five crews (450+ people, 17 pilots and 14 cinematographers) follow bird migrations through 40 countries and across all the continents.

### DECEMBER AT A GLIMPSE

Sat 4	ASF Birdwalks & NRF walk
Sat 11	Tree Walk
Sat 18	NRF walk and FFJ Birdwalk
Sun 19	Sunday Birdwalk
Sat 25	Mt Kenya birdwalk
Man 27	Tree Walk
<i>Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning</i>	
<i>Bird ringing every Thursday Morning</i>	
<i>Kisumu bird walks every Friday</i>	

### JANUARY AT A GLIMPSE

Sat 1	ASF Birdwalks & NRF walk
Sat 8	Tree Walk
Sat 15	NRF walk and FFJ Birdwalk
Sun 16	Sunday Birdwalk
Sat 29	Mt Kenya birdwalk
Man 31	Tree Walk
<i>Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning</i>	
<i>Bird ringing every Thursday Morning</i>	
<i>Kisumu bird walks every Friday</i>	

### Editorial Team

Editor Catherine Ngarachu  
Evening Skies Fleur Ng'weno  
Naturalist's Corner Dino Martins



Special offer to members

### 20% off at the Driftwood Beachclub

Nature Kenya members can stay at the Driftwood in Malindi, on presentation of their membership card, and get 20% discount (if paying by cash or cheque). The Driftwood is a charming beachfront property with great food and service.

(Unfortunately they are already well booked for the Christmas period from 20 December 04.)

Contact Driftwood Beachclub  
<driftwood@swiftmalindi.com>  
or tel 042 20155

## FIELD OUTINGS

**Tsavo East**  
at Patterson's Safari Camp

**Saturday 11 - Monday 13 December 04**

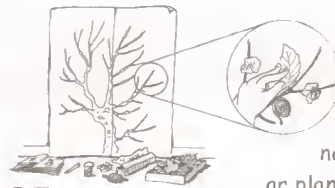
Let's go to Tsavo on this long weekend!

Meet at the Nairobi Museum car park at 8:15 a.m. for prompt departure at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday 11 December. Transport is by car pool and participants should be ready to contribute for the ride.

Book right away, at the Nature Kenya office, with 4500/- fb per person sharing.

Cost does not include KWS fees - please carry a charged smart card!

### Basic Botany for Beginners with Ann Birnie



1/2 day course on plant life and identification.

Bring pen and notebook and any tree or plant book.

**Sat 15 January 05**  
**Nairobi Arboretum**  
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Book with 600/-, in advance, at the Nature Kenya front office. Minimum 15 pax

### Kenya Birds



Kenya Birds Volume 11 is hot off the press and goes out to members this month, with the newsletter

### The History of Succulent Plants in Kenya



Succulenta subscribers also receive *The History of Succulent Plants in Kenya*

### Shopping for gifts?

At Nature Kenya you can get natural history books and the following items:

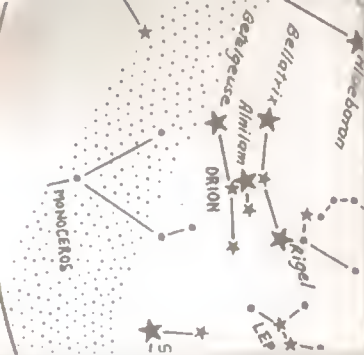
**The Bird Song of Kenya and Tanzania** by John Hammick. A CD with 99 species recorded on safari @ 900/-

**Arabuko Sokoke Forest Honey** @ 200/-

**BirdLife Caps** @ 380/-

**World Birdwatch T-shirts** @ 600/-

# Happy Holiday Season!



# natural history

## EVENING SKY

by Ian Jackson

### December Moon 04

5 Dec Last Quarter (rises at midnight); 12 Dec New Moon; 18 Dec First Quarter (overhead at sunrise); 26 Dec Full Moon

### January Moon 04

3 Jan Lost Quarter (rises at midnight); 10 Jan New Moon; 17 Jan First Quarter (overhead at sunset); 25 Jan Full moon

### December Sun

On the 21<sup>st</sup> the sun is at its farthest south of the celestial equator; this December solstice marks the start of winter for those in northern latitudes, the start of summer for those in the south.

### Dec and Jan stars

December and January skies are full of beautiful stars. Look to the east for a group of six stars clustered together; these are the Seven Sisters or Pleiades. Near the Pleiades is a bright, reddish star, the fiery eye of Taurus the bull.

Most of our English names for the stars and the constellations - the patterns made by the stars - come from the legends of the ancient Greek and Romans. Southeast of the Pleiades the constellation of Orion, the great warrior, is rising. To the Greeks the stars formed the shape of a man striding across the southern sky; to us on the equator it is more difficult to visualise:

Look for three bright stars in a row; four other bright stars form the corners of a box around the three stars. To the Greeks, the three stars were Orion's belt; a line of three fainter stars were the sword hanging from his belt.

The other four stars were his knees, including blue-green Rigel, and his shoulders, including reddish Betelgeuse.

Use binoculars to see the Orion Nebula at the tip of the sword (the three faint stars next to the three bright stars). With binoculars, you will also see many more stars in the Pleiades cluster and the face of Taurus.

The brightest star we can see at night, Sirius, is in the southeast; and Canopus, the second brightest star in the sky, is lower in the south. Canopus cannot be seen in the north, but we have legends from some of the San people of southern Africa: Sirius is the 'Grandmother of Canopus' as Sirius rises just after Canopus, just as the elderly follow behind the more ogile youths.

The constellation of Cassiopeia is low in the north. Look for stars forming a conspicuous zigzag or "M" shape. The great square of Pegasus is high in the northwest.

### Dec 04 and Jan 05 Planets

The planets are in the dawn sky this season. Brilliant Venus rises in the east about an hour and a half before the sun and can still be seen in the morning twilight. Bright Jupiter is high in the morning sky; the moon is just north of Jupiter on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Viewed from some places, the moon will occult (pass directly in front of) this giant planet.

# SCOPUS



Volume 24 now available from Nature Kenya @ 500/-

### Contents

LUCA BORGHESIO **Variation in waterbird populations of two freshwater lakes in Marsabit National Park, northern Kenya**

NORBERT J CORDEIRO, ELIA MULUNGU, GODFREY G MAINA AND JON C LOVETT **Birds of the Kihansi Gorge, south-eastern Udzungwa Mountains**

MARC BAKER **A preliminary survey of the avifauna of Eminit Forest, Loima Hills, western Turkana District**

LUCA BORGHESIO, KARIUKI NDANG'ANG'A, NICODEMUS NALYANYA, MARTIN KAHINDI AND PAOLA LAIOLO **Some interesting bird observations from Northern Kenya**

ROBERT J DOWSETT **Comments on the distribution of Cape Teal *Anas capensis***

### Short Communications

PETE AND ANDREAS LEONARD **Black-rumped Buttonquail *Turnix hottentota* in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania**

OLIVIER HAMERLYNCK AND STEPHANIE DUVAIL **Suspected breeding of Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* in Mafia Island Marine Park, Tanzania**

MICHAEL MILLS **A range extension for Zenker's Honeyguide *Melignonmon zenkeri* from Kibale National Park, Uganda**

KD DIJKSTRA **First record of Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda* in East Africa**

### Bird Hotline

## 3749957

Ortolan Bunting *Buffalo Springs N.R. / Oct*  
Sanderling *Ruddy Turnstone, African Skimmers L. Naivasha / Oct*  
Shailesh Patel, Titus Imboma and friends

African Cuckoo Hawk *Karen / Oct*  
A Rocha members  
Birdwalk

Grey Olive Greenbul *Nairobi Arboretum / Oct*  
Alan Johnston and Chege Kariuki

Dwarf Bittern *Carnivore / Nov Wed.*  
Morning Birdwalk

## PLANT INDIGENOUS ! TREES AND SHRUBS

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CONTACT: CROPWATCH LTD TREE NURSERY  
CAROLE HEMMINGS 0733 747865  
[hemmings@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:hemmings@africaonline.co.ke)  
OR JOANNA TRENCH 0733 603839.



# African Bird Club

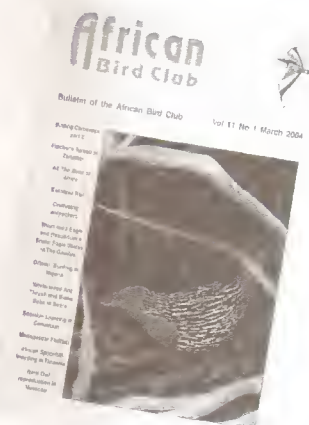
- working for birds in  
Africa

Members of Nature Kenya can now join the African Bird Club and pay minimal subscription rates (800/- or as a student 500/-), which are well below the normal rates.

All money raised through this scheme will be used to promote bird-related conservation in Kenya, so please pay more than the indicated minimum if you feel you can afford to do so.

ABC's aim is to promote knowledge about and the conservation of African birds and their habitats. ABC takes a Continent-wide view and maintains a Conservation Fund to complement and support the work of local societies, such as Nature Kenya, and of international conservation organisations working in Africa.

The African Bird Club is a charity (Charity No 1053920) registered in the United Kingdom.



## The ABC Bulletin

The ABC Bulletin is published twice-yearly and is packed full of feature articles about:

- news and recent reports from around the region including details of new species, conservation updates, etc
- fully illustrated identification articles for difficult groups such as the greenbuls
- informed reviews of Africa-related birding books and sound recordings
- guides to top birding spots in Africa

## Why join ABC?

As well as receiving the ABC Bulletin full of articles relating to African birds, birding and conservation, members become part of a diverse community spread not only throughout Africa, but on the other four continents as well, united by a shared passion for African birds.

## JANUARY WATERBIRD COUNTS

To participate please contact Kariuki Ntang'ang'a at the Department of Ornithology, Nairobi Museum  
tel 3742161-4 or email  
kbirds@africaonline.co.ke

## Membership Services Post Vacant

**Challenging and exciting position available**  
**Membership Services Officer** needed to build membership and develop strong sales

Responsibilities include:

- Handling membership subscriptions
- Working with volunteers
- Helping in recruitment drives
- Organising and facilitating a considerable number of member activities and services
- Handling enquiries by mail, on the phone or by email
- Maintaining a membership database
- Handling orders and sales of publications and other items
- Organising the packing and distribution of publications

The position requires someone who can demonstrate:

- Excellent writing skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Is a good organiser, planner and is able to pay attention to detail
- Can work with an MS Access database
- Interest in natural history, outdoor activities and conservation
- At least a Diploma in Marketing or Sales or other relevant qualification

To apply send an application letter and CV to the Membership Services Manager, Nature Kenya by **4th January 05**.

Thank you, for your interest.

## Evening Sky Continued from page 2

Saturn rises about midnight and is visible before dawn. Reddish Mars is seen higher each morning in December. Mars is very close to Venus on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, on the 10<sup>th</sup> the thin silver of our moon is also nearby. Come new year, Mars rises some 2 hours before the sun.

## December meteor showers

A meteor shower is produced when the orbit of the Earth intersects with a cloud of dust particles. These particles are most often formed by the disintegration of a comet or asteroid. Most visible meteors are about the size of a grain of sand; a few are larger. These particles burn up as they enter the earth's atmosphere, forming "shooting stars" or "burning spears".

The Geminid meteor shower is Dec 4<sup>th</sup> - Dec 16<sup>th</sup> and viewing conditions are expected to be very favourable. Look for more "shooting stars" than usual in the night sky on those days, peaking on the morning of December 14<sup>th</sup>.

## CLASSIFIEDS

Reach over 1000 members by advertising in Nature Net  
Rates for Classifieds: • Up to 25 words 250/- • Up to 50 words 500/-  
Ads • 1/4 page @ 1750/- • 1/2 page @ 3000/-  
• with image +500/-



**DECLARATION**

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

**BIRD RINGING**

Meet at the Museums' Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

**Ngong Road Forest Walks (Nairobi)**

Organised by the Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust, nature walks are held on the first and third Saturdays of the month i.e. **4 & 18 Dec/ 1 & 15 Jan, at 9:00 a.m.** Meet at the stairs leading to the Restaurant at the Racecourse. Call Anthony Charo to confirm on 575207 or 0733 712406.

**WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS**

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

**SUNDAY BIRDWATCH**

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, i.e. **19 Dec/ 16 Jan.** The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

**TREE WALKS**

Guided tree walks in the Arboretum on the second Saturday and last Monday, i.e. **11 & 27 Dec/ 8 & 31 Jan from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the Arboretum gate. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

**ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)**

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **4 Dec/ 1 Jan, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person. KWS fees now apply (100/- Citizens, 500/- Residents)

**Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (Kisumu)**

The Lake Victoria Sunset Birders are a Nature Kenya Site Support Group and organise bird walks at sites in and around Kisumu every Friday of the month. For further details call 057 42952 or 0734 994938 or email lakevictoriasunsetbirders@yahoo.ca.uk

**Mt Kenya Biodiversity Conservation Group (MKBCG)**

The MKBCG is a Nature Kenya Site Support Group and organise bird walks to sites around Naro Moru every last Saturday of the month. For more information contact 0722 364904, 0733 937115 or 062 62071 Email: mt\_kebia@yahoo.ca.uk

**FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)**

Friends of Fart Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month, i.e. **18 Dec/ 15 Jan.** Please call Marlene Reid on (041) 491 648 to confirm



**Plan your weekend or other break to stay at the Kinangop Guest House**

Perched on the Kinangop Plateau with incredible views across the Rift Valley, the farm combines tussack-grass pasture, indigenous forest, and attractive gardens. The guesthouse is comfortable and fully furnished. Visitors can enjoy hikes and walks on the farm or go further afield with local guides.

For more information, brochure and non-member rates please contact Nature Kenya.

Guest House rates: Day visit 350/-

MEMBER nos	Overnight	Weekend
1 to 2 pax	4000/-	6500/-
3	4,900/-	7,400/-
4	5,800/-	8,300/-

*Renew your subscription*

**NatureKenya**

Yes!  Start  Renew my Nature Kenya membership

**MAILING ADDRESS (BLOCK LETTERS)**

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 First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Ms/Mr/Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (0) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mobile \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

(OPTIONAL - but useful to us in planning)

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age Bracket (tick) under 21( ) 21-35( ) 36-50( ) over 50( )  
 Country of Origin \_\_\_\_\_  
 Would you like us to share your contacts Yes/ NO

For Official Use Only Sub No. \_\_\_\_\_ Recept. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mode \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_ Recept Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you live reside outside of Kenya please refer to www.naturekenya.org



**MEMBERSHIP TYPE Ksh Per Year Enter Amount**

Full	1000	_____
Sponsor	3000	_____
Family	1400	_____
Pensioners	400	_____
Students (Full time & undergraduate)	400	_____
Institutional (Libraries, schools, clubs)	1000	_____
Corporate	10000	_____
Corporate Plus	20000	_____

**ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Kenya Birds (tick to receive this free Bird magazine)

Journal of E.A. Natural History	1000	_____
Scopus (Ornithological Journal)	500	_____
World Birdwatch (the BirdLife International magazine)	1500	_____
Succulenta East Africa	400	_____
Friends of Nairobi Arboretum		_____
Single - 400/-, Student - 250/-, School or Club - 800/-		_____
African Bird Club (Student 500/-)	800/-	_____

**DONATIONS Help us to do even more!**

5000/ 8000/ Other	_____
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**Total**