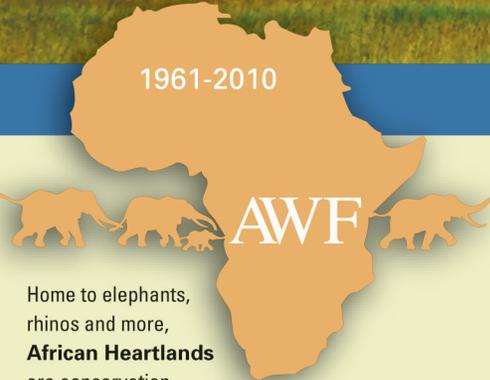


# African Wildlife News

Billy Dodson

1961-2010

YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK IN THE AFRICAN HEARTLANDS



Home to elephants, rhinos and more, **African Heartlands** are conservation landscapes large enough to sustain a diversity of species for centuries to come. In these landscapes—places like Kilimanjaro and Samburu—AWF and its partners are pioneering lasting conservation strategies that benefit wildlife and people alike.

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Wildlife that pays as it goes...and goes.



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In the Kazungula Heartland, a Sekute summary.



Billy Dodson

A recent decision by the body that regulates trade in endangered species has put a stay on the sales of legal ivory stockpiles for at least another three years.

## Elephant Watch

Twenty years after the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) placed a ban on the ivory trade, elephant conservation recently underwent another defining moment. Ahead of the triennial CITES meeting this past March, two African countries, Tanzania and Zambia, requested to downlist the endangered status of their elephant populations and sell their legal ivory stockpiles (mostly tusks taken from elephants that died of natural causes).

This is not the first time CITES would consider such requests. Twice before the international body charged with regulating trade in endangered species had authorized African countries with healthy and well-managed elephant populations to sell part of their legal ivory stockpiles, stipulating that the proceeds be reinvested in elephant conservation. Both times AWF and others worried the sales would fuel the illegal ivory trade. While such fears

were not borne out after the first sales, in 1999, a recent and dramatic rise in elephant killings, while not conclusively tied to a second round of sales in 2008, has reignited debate within the conservation community.

Ahead of the March CITES meeting, weighing all the data on elephant killings and illegal ivory seizures, AWF recommended CITES reject the country requests to sell ivory stockpiles. "There is credible evidence of significant flows of illegal ivory from and through these countries and insufficient verification that all conditions for downlisting have been met," read AWF's Position Statement (available at [www.awf.org](http://www.awf.org)). Amid contentious debate, a majority of CITES delegates concluded the same thing, and voted the proposals down. "We believe these decisions are in the best interests of Africa's elephants," said Dr. Philip Muruthi, AWF's Senior Director of Conservation Science.

*continued on page 3*



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## Machache ~ A FEW WORDS

With so many things going on in the world today, it isn't easy to stay connected or to act on all the things that matter to each of us individually. Yet as a member of the African Wildlife Foundation, you have time and again stepped up to conserve the wildlife and wild lands of Africa, and time and again you have helped us achieve amazing things.

AWF is extremely grateful to you for being committed to our mission. And while your individual contribution is so important, you may not realize there are many, many other people like you, men and women from different walks of life, all committed to the same principles of conservation. People like Susan of New York City, who learned about Africa's wildlife at her grandfather's side. Or Allan from Fort Bragg, California, who grew deeply committed to wildlife conservation after visiting a dilapidated zoo as a boy. Or Kristina of Stockholm, Sweden, whose commitment to people has spurred her interest in wildlife. Or Stuart of Lake Bluff, Illinois, who likes to remind people that the birds of Africa also need our attention. Or Molly of Middlebury, Vermont, who started supporting AWF as a young girl and continues to do so as a grown woman.

These are just a handful of the people committed to the mission of AWF. Many of you I will never get to meet; but like our staff across Africa and our Board of Trustees, all of you are equally part of the AWF family.

I am dwelling on this issue of connectedness because as part of our 50th Anniversary planning, I have been looking through historical photos and thinking a lot about what sustains AWF. Interestingly, I noticed that in each decade, like a thread running through our history, there is an image of the very newsletter you hold in your hands—*African Wildlife News*. It is at the center of a dialogue that started 50 years ago and continues today, with some notable changes, of course.



AWF/Paul Thomson

Once reported only in the pages of *African Wildlife News*, that dialogue is now taking place on Facebook (just visit [www.awf.org/facebook](http://www.awf.org/facebook)), on Twitter ([www.awf.org/twitter](http://www.awf.org/twitter)), on YouTube ([www.awf.org/youtube](http://www.awf.org/youtube)), and on the many blogs and personal sites fueled by the AWF community. Rather than dilute matters, this is making the AWF conversation richer, more dynamic, and much farther reaching.

Although this evolution has been happening at AWF for some time, in the months ahead we will introduce changes to *African Wildlife News* that will better reflect it. The newsletter will become more visual and interactive, with features alerting you to the online conversations and opportunities that now abound. We'll also be alerting you to the strong mission focus of our membership program, including various enhancements being introduced as part of our 50th Anniversary Program.

I hope you like the direction of the newsletter and our other membership enhancements. I look forward to hearing what you think (we already have a Facebook page for that!).

Thank you for supporting AWF.

Patrick J. Bergin, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer  
African Wildlife Foundation



*African Wildlife News* in a previous incarnation. Although the look has changed from decade to decade, AWF's flagship newsletter has remained at the center of the AWF dialogue.

## Elephant Watch *(continued from page 1)*



Learn more about the CITES decision and AWF's elephant conservation work at [www.awf.org/citesruling](http://www.awf.org/citesruling)

### Elephants in the Heartlands

Through its Heartland Program, AWF works to secure enough land to combine parks, private lands, and community areas into large conservation landscapes that give elephants the room they need to thrive. Elephant conservation is the basis of AWF's planning in Heartlands with sizable populations of the pachyderms:



**Kazungula Heartland** (home to about 135,000 elephants): AWF has helped established the Sekute Conservation Area covering 235 square miles at the point where Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe meet (see p. 7).



**Kilimanjaro Heartland** (home to about 2,000 elephants): AWF has secured an important elephant corridor and established a series of community conservancies that support the Amboseli ecosystem. AWF also supports the Hifadhi Network, an elephant antipoaching patrol that has intensified its activities in response to the rise in elephant killings.



**Maasai Steppe Heartland** (home to about 12,000 elephants): AWF has secured elephant movement corridors and established a Wildlife Management Area in partnership with local communities. It has also restructured a large, government-owned ranch into a wildlife haven that supports elephants and creates livelihood opportunities for local people.



**Regional Parc W Heartland** (seasonal home to about 3,800 elephants): On launching its newest Heartland, which straddles the borders of Benin, Niger, and Burkina Faso, AWF supported the capacity building of Benin's national elephant strategy. AWF is now designing large-landscape conservation strategies based partly on elephant movement patterns.



**Samburu Heartland** (home to about 7,500 elephants): AWF has created several first-class community-driven enterprises that have secured habitat for elephants while generating benefits for communities. It also supports wildlife scout patrols and has worked closely with its partners to count and monitor the region's elephant population.

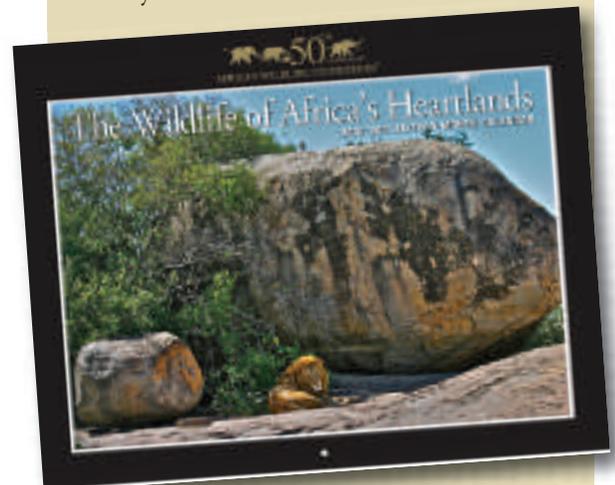


**Zambezi Heartland** (home to about 40,000 elephants): AWF experts have long worked with Zambian communities in the Lower Zambezi region to defend their crops by planting chili pepper plants, which repel elephants. Better monitoring of elephant movements, improved warning systems, and encouraging elephant-friendly livelihoods are also hallmarks of the AWF program.

## News in Brief

### A Year to Remember

AWF will mark its upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the Special Edition 2010-2011 Calendar that features stunning images and interesting facts about Africa's wildlife. A complimentary copy is on its way to each AWF member. Look for your calendar soon, and celebrate 50 years of conservation success in Africa every month of the year.



### Thanks Friends for Change!

AWF thanks all the dedicated supporters who voted for AWF's Give Elephants Room to Roam project! Selected by The Walt Disney Company to receive funding through its Friends for Change: Project Green, the AWF initiative is protecting elephants and their habitat in Zambia. AWF competed for the special funding with four other nonprofits to protect key habitats. Thanks again to both The Walt Disney Company and our Friends for Change! ■

### Did you know?

Elephant routes are the "blueprint" for the conservation measures AWF deploys within most of its Heartlands. Mapping the routes elephants have carved out over centuries—areas that often cross international borders and can span hundreds of miles—AWF experts gauge the capacity of an ecosystem to support the world's largest living land mammal and other keystone species, and design targeted conservation measures that extend and support the habitat elephants rely on. ■



Billy Dodson

An elephant's tusks are actually its upper incisors. Made only of dentine, the composition of the tusk is no different from that of ordinary teeth.

# COUNTING CRITTERS

The United States Census determines the structure of the U.S. House of Representatives and how funds are allocated for other social goods.

But of what use are wildlife counts in Africa, and why do they matter?

It takes legions of workers, a lot of financial resources, and the cooperation of people young and old to conduct a national census. A wildlife count similarly requires an expert team and a sizable financial investment, but the subjects are a lot less cooperative. So why do it at all? A wildlife census determines three things: (1) the abundance and distribution of wildlife species, (2) the trend in species numbers compared with past counts, and (3) the extent of human activities in the ecosystem. This information is used to identify threats to wildlife and design conservation activities that address these threats. Indeed, designing conservation measures without knowing where wildlife goes and the obstacles it faces would be like driving a car with your eyes closed.

Eyes wide open, AWF with its partners routinely orchestrates wildlife counts in its Heartlands. Most recently, we and other partners joined a historic transboundary census of the area that roughly maps AWF's Kilimanjaro Heartland, conducted by national park authorities in Kenya and Tanzania (see map). "The transboundary nature of the census was so important because wildlife that covers a wide range, such as elephants, move from one part of the ecosystem to the other without any sense of international boundaries," says Fiesta Warinwa, AWF's Kilimanjaro Heartland Director. "This gives us a clear understanding of the situation of wildlife on both sides of the border and allows all stakeholders to properly plan and implement threat-mitigation measures."

## Eat, Prey, Love

The timing of the census, coming after a severe and prolonged drought that ended a year ago, left many experts fearing the worst.

But counter to this foreboding, all was not lost. Perhaps most surprisingly, the famed elephant population of the Amboseli area remained relatively stable, at about 1,420 individuals. While continuing to rely on Amboseli National Park as an important refuge, elephants made long-range movements outside the park into areas being protected with the help of AWF and others.

The area's large grazing herbivores, which need abundant and healthy pasture, were less fortunate, however. The wildebeest population in Amboseli plummeted 83 percent (from 18,538 to 3,098), and zebras by about 71 percent (from 15,328 to 4,432), vastly reducing the prey base available for large carnivores such as lions. "In some cases there was predator starvation," says Fiesta. "Other problems caused by the drought were increased human-wildlife conflict, as livestock and wildlife competed for resources, and increased poaching."

The livestock population also declined precipitously, seriously affecting livelihood opportunities for the people of the region. "Due to the drought, a lot of the communities living within the census area that need water and pasture for their livestock were forced to migrate with their livestock to other areas," says Fiesta. "Migration and the increased concentration of livestock populations in select areas also led to more intensive use of limited resources and hence created some degradation."

Though withstanding steep losses on several levels, the landscape and its wildlife have already begun to recover. "Conditions have greatly improved since the drought ended, with enough green pasture for both wildlife and livestock," says Fiesta. Wildebeest and

## Counting from Amboseli to Magadi ...



Aerial count census using six small aircraft

flying over 28 discrete blocks or "transects" (a total of about 15,000 square miles).



Wet season count (March 1-6), conducted

when wildlife moves outside of protected areas and into the larger landscape.



Large team of census officials, pilots, GIS experts, and technical observers, including AWF field experts.

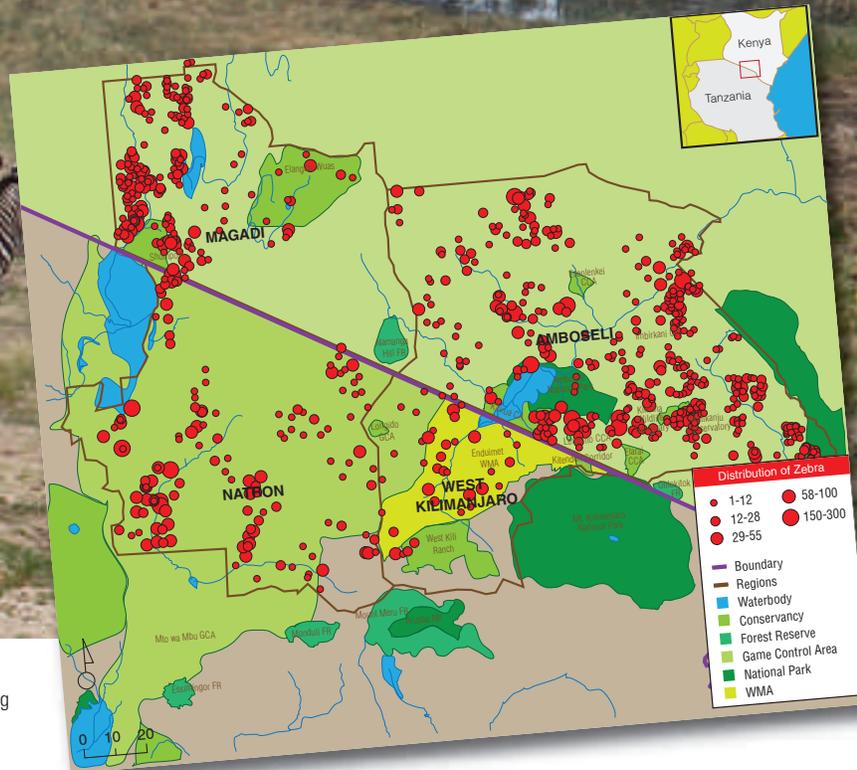


Data recorded on handheld geographic

information GIS devices and supplemented by photographs and digitally recorded visual observations.



Flight path and count data analyzed using special census technique and software.



The Amboseli elephant population held steady at 1,420 individuals, though the area's large grazers suffered huge losses in the aftermath of the 2008-2009 drought, according to a recent wildlife census in the Kilimanjaro Heartland.

zebra populations are thus expected to rebound, census experts conclude, as long as large-landscape conservation efforts succeeded in protecting these grazers' migration routes and habitat.

**Environmental Alerts**

Any recovery, of course, depends on to what extent threat-mitigation measures work. The census identified several major threats being addressed through AWF's Heartland Program:

**Threat:** *Crop cultivation and other development are threatening to block wildlife movement routes and cut into habitat available for grazing and browsing.*

**AWF Action:** Working with its national, local, and community partners, AWF promotes land use and zoning practices that serve human needs and give wildlife a chance to flourish. AWF is also helping communities earn income off of wildlife resources and to promote sustainable agricultural practices.

**Threat:** *Charcoal burning to create fuel for cooking is destroying habitat and polluting the air.*

**AWF Action:** AWF is working to create livelihood alternatives that help people depend less on charcoal-related and other natural-resource-based activities. AWF is also piloting climate change initiatives that give communities economic incentive to keep forested areas from being cleared. Wildlife scouts such as the Hifadhi Network and Amboseli Tsavo Game Association regularly report on illegal activities occurring in wildlife-zoned areas.

**Threat:** *As more people settle permanently in the region, construction companies are mining local materials for roads and other purposes.*

**AWF Action:** AWF believes development that benefits people, such as well-planned roads, is ultimately for the good of Africa, but works with local and national officials to plan routes (or shape commercial plans) that do not interfere with wildlife movements or harm an ecosystem's viability. Recently, when a large construction company began excavating a quarry in a community-created conservancy, AWF sought legal recourse and helped stop the illegal activity. ■

Of the 25 species counted during the transboundary Kenya-Tanzania census, the zebra (see red circles in the above map) was the most plentiful, though its population shrank dramatically.



Read an interview with AWF Heartland Director Fiesta Warinwa and the full census report at [www.awf.org/kilicensus](http://www.awf.org/kilicensus)



**What do these five animals have in common?**



The zebra, Grant's gazelle, common wildebeest, Maasai giraffe, and the common eland were the top most-counted species in the Kenya-Tanzania wildlife census.



# Enterprising Effects

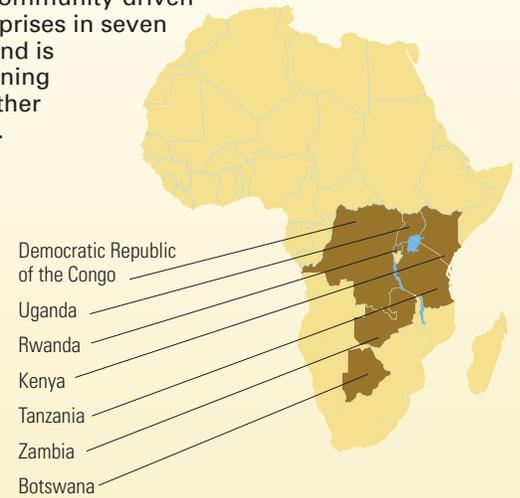
People will conserve natural resources if the benefits they stand to gain will exceed the costs of conservation, and if the natural assets in question are directly linked to their quality of life. This is a core value of AWF's. In Africa, AWF sees unparalleled opportunity to harness the continent's unique assets and conserve a living legacy for the entire planet.

Enter AWF's Conservation Enterprise Program, launched in the late 1990s. At AWF, a conservation enterprise is a commercial activity that generates economic benefits in a way that supports the attainment of a conservation objective. To date, AWF has helped create tourism enterprises such as conservation lodges and conservancies, agricultural enterprises such as coffee production, natural product enterprises that harvest and process natural products such as honey and mushrooms, and livestock production (see box). Here, we provide a snapshot of a decade-plus of Conservation Enterprise. ■

## Open for Business

### Countries with AWF-Brokered Conservation Enterprises

AWF has opened community-driven conservation enterprises in seven African countries and is developing or planning enterprises in its other program countries.



## Innovations in Enterprise:

### AWF's New Livestock for Livelihoods Program

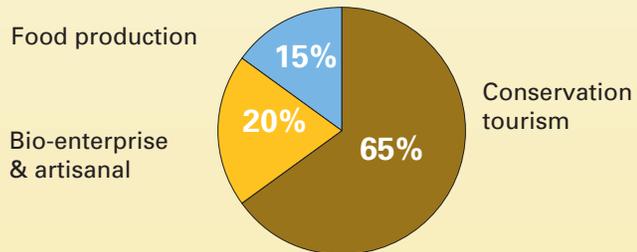
In the savanna and steppe ecosystems of East Africa, pastoralists have long herded their cattle against an intricate backdrop of wildlife survival that draws thousands of visitors from around the world every year. But as human populations grow and development encroaches on ever-scarcer resources, this co-existence is becoming increasingly conflict-ridden. In response, AWF has launched an innovative program that rewards herders who pursue environmentally sound grazing practices and other conservation objectives. Now being piloted in Kenya and Tanzania (see bullets), AWF will eventually replicate this program in other Heartlands where people make a living keeping livestock.

- **Kenya.** In exchange for conservation-friendly grazing practices, AWF is partnering with a private conservancy to guarantee purchase of beef at a fair market price. In the first six months alone, 626 community cows were purchased, earning the participating communities \$100,000.

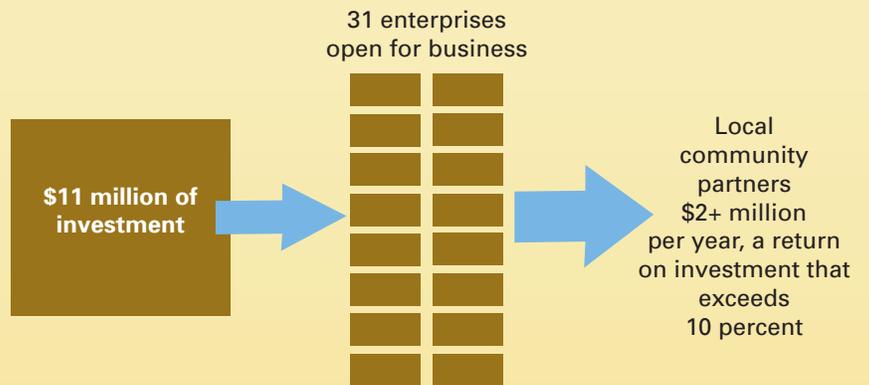
- **Tanzania.** AWF is promoting good grazing practices with seven Maasai communities and linking them to livestock processing facilities and, eventually, market outlets. This innovative program is expected to generate \$2 million in profits in the first three years alone.

## AWF Enterprise Portfolio by Sector

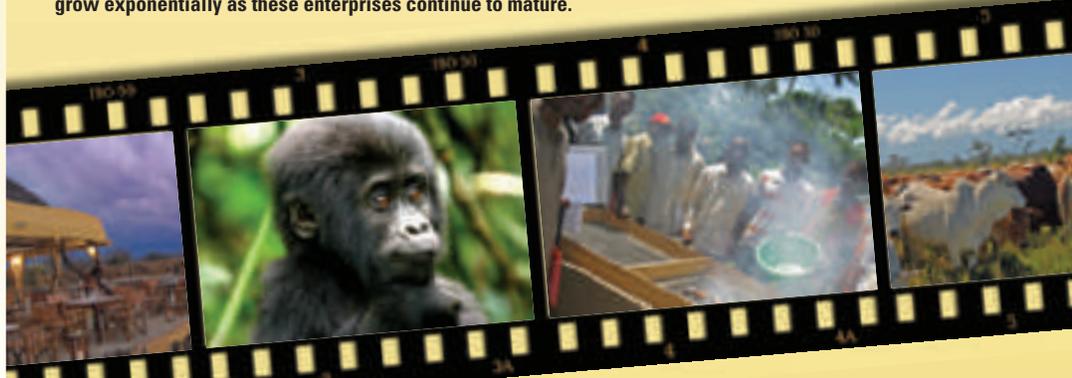
AWF presently has a portfolio of over 60 enterprises in production or operation.



## Enterprise Returns



The 31 enterprises AWF has opened are generating more than \$2 million dollars a year in income for our local community partners, from just \$200,000 five years ago. AWF expects this return on investment to grow exponentially as these enterprises continue to mature.



# Your Support at Work

Spotlight on Sekute Chiefdom



Craig R. Sholley

AWF orchestrated the training of 18 community scouts who have already started patrolling the conservation area. Here the scouts pose with members of the Sekute Community Development Trust, local students benefiting from AWF programs, as well as AWF staff and Trustees visiting the site earlier this year.

**AWF Project:** In partnership with the Sekute Chiefdom, a regional subdistrict of some 20,000 people, AWF has established the Sekute Conservation Area, which covers more than 160,000 acres. Located at the point where Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe meet, the Sekute Conservation Area includes 25 miles of Zambezi River frontage.

**Conservation logic:** Wildlife historically moved freely through this area, but population growth, agriculture, and tourism-related construction have increasingly threatened the corridors along which the animals travel. Having identified wildlife crossing points on the Zambezi River in danger of becoming blocked, AWF is designing measures to protect these routes and enable large wildlife populations in Botswana to move north into available habitat in Zambia. As well as protecting the corridors, the establishment of the Sekute Conservation Area is turning them into an investment for the local people and wildlife.

**Progress to Date:** AWF has identified two elephant corridors and has worked with local communities to designate a 50,000-acre section of the Chiefdom as the Silingombe Conservancy. It has also helped households form a community trust in which they can hold their valuable riverfront land, and has launched an Easements for Education Program that helps families who conserve land send their children to school. Next, it will build a primary school that will serve families that live near the conservation area.

**How can you help?** Support AWF's efforts to protect the region's elephant corridors, further work on the Silingombe Conservancy, and build and equip a new primary school. Visit [www.awf.org/sekute](http://www.awf.org/sekute) today. ■

"It was as much a privilege to meet the regional officials, the 18 newly graduated game scouts, and the children who are benefiting from the program 'Conservation Easements for Education', as it was to witness the planning of future wildlife corridors. These are clear examples of the transformational work being done by AWF's staff in conjunction with the local people,"

— Fernanda Kellogg, President of The Tiffany & Co. Foundation, during a visit to the Sekute Conservation Area. Ms. Kellogg's organization is supporting AWF's work in the Sekute Chiefdom and the Kazungula Heartland.

Craig R. Sholley



These elephants are benefiting from AWF's work with the Sekute Chiefdom, which has resulted in the creation of a 50,000-acre conservancy and conservation measures that center on two key elephant corridors.

# Wildlife Watch

## Spotted Hyena

**S**hrouded in mystery, legend, and folklore and often labeled as a cowardly, jestering scalawag, the spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*), better known as “the Laughing Hyena,” is no joke as it is one of Africa’s—and nature’s—most fearsome and fascinating species.

The spotted hyena, of the family *Hyaenidae*, is the largest member of this family (standing at about 34 inches), which also includes the brown and striped hyena, as well as the lesser-known aardwolf. Found in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of the Congo Basin, it is from these lands much of the folklore surrounding the hyena has been formed, including the myth of the hyena being a shape shifter (not true, by the way).

The spotted hyena gets its moniker “the Laughing Hyena” from its world-famous “giggle” which is no laughing matter: this sound is the vocalization used to alert fellow hyenas of found prey or an approaching predator. It is not to be taken lightly: when hunting for prey, a group of spotted hyenas has been recorded to pull down black rhino and hippo calves, and even young elephants. After making a kill, a single hyena can eat up to 32 lbs. of flesh in a sitting; a cackle of hyenas can eat an entire adult zebra in under 30 minutes and is able to consume and digest all bone, teeth, horns, and skin from its prey.

Exceptionally equipped to scavenge, the spotted hyena boasts one of the most powerful bites in the wild: its cone-shaped upper and lower premolars are made for crushing bone and along with its over-sized canines, the hyena can tear through flesh and bone with razor-like precision. Combine all this with their large jaw muscles and the spotted hyena packs a bite that has 40 percent more force than a leopard’s.



Mark Boulton

**After making a kill, a single hyena can eat up to 32 lbs. of flesh in a sitting.**



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