



BIG LIFE

FOUNDATION

QUARTERLY REPORT (JULY - SEPT 2015)

MISSION STATEMENT

*“On the ground in Africa, partnering with communities
to protect nature for the benefit of all.”*

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Two things strike me as I look back over the achievements and happenings of this quarter. Firstly, as you read this report you won’t go long without seeing mention of government departments and other NGOs, on both sides of the border. Collaboration and communication between wildlife conservation stakeholders in this part of Kenya has been improving for a while, and the results are starting to show. This is hugely satisfying to see, because it is only through collaboration that the complex problems associated with wildlife will be tackled on large scales.

The second thing is how our monitoring of wildlife crime court cases has improved. The details presented in this report might seem concise and straightforward, but they represent a huge effort by our staff in getting to these cases, and dealing with the hurdles in trying to access the information. We believe that this monitoring is a sign to the justice system that there are people watching, and corruption will be exposed. The sentences handed out for wildlife crime have been severe, and while it is not something that we enjoy seeing, we hope that the examples being set will act as a deterrent against poaching and other wildlife crime in the future.

On the subject of poaching, there have been some unpleasant incidences over the last quarter. Particularly devastating was the loss of a black rhino calf, named Bahati, in the Chyulu Hills rhino area. Having watched this young bull survive a previous poaching attempt in which he lost his mother, we were all emotionally invested in this rhino and it was a blow to lose him to a snaring attempt. In another significant poaching incident six elephants were gunned down in nearby Tsavo National Park. However, in a demonstration of the collaboration talked about above, three of the gang members were tracked and caught. Through the work of Big Life and our partners, poaching in and around the Amboseli Ecosystem continues to be a high-risk activity.



*Richard Bonham,
Director of Operations*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AOO	Area of Operation
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BLF	Big Life Foundation
DSWT	David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
HEC	Human Elephant Conflict
HWC	Human Wildlife Conflict
IPZ	Intensive Protection Zone
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
MWCT	Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust
OP	Observation Post
PCF	Predator Compensation Fund
RDU	Rapid Deployment Unit
TANAPA	Tanzania National Parks

WILDLIFE SECURITY

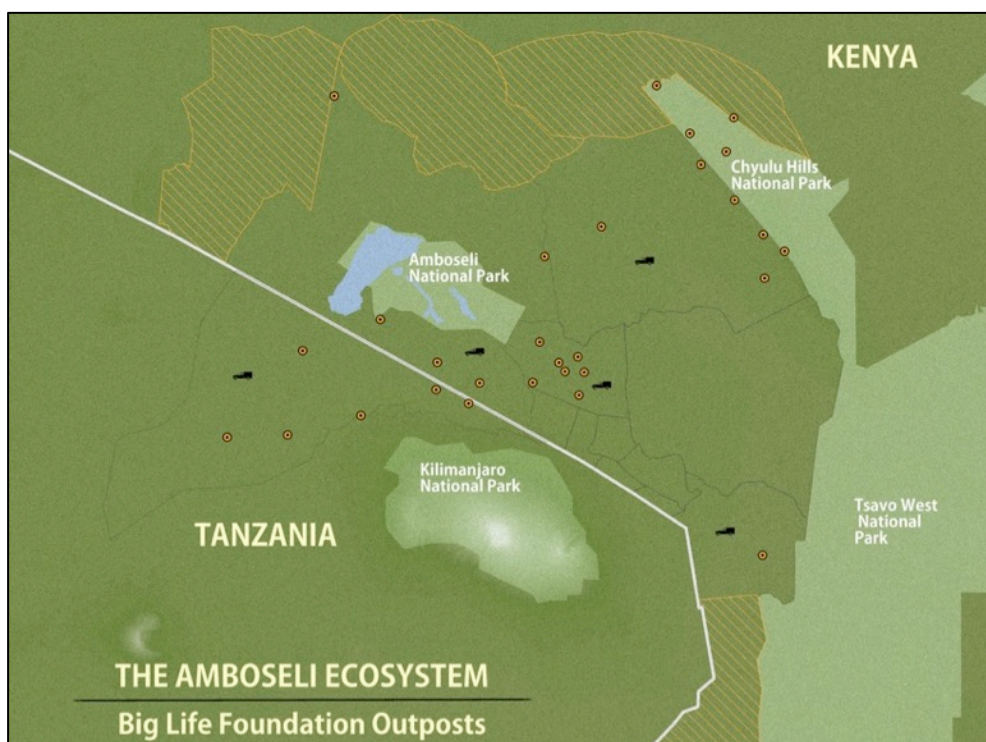
Over the third quarter of 2015 Big Life Foundation (BLF) rangers made a total of **33 arrests**, apprehending a total of **83 suspects** for various crimes (detailed in the table on the following page). Although there was a significant drop in the number of habitat destruction incidents (32 suspects in 12 incidents compared to 52 suspects in 19 incidents in the second quarter), it continues to be the leading form of illegal activity encountered.

Over the reporting period BLF rangers patrolled **25,219 Km** by foot and **51,480 Km** by vehicle.

BIG LIFE RANGERS

There are a total of 35 units (six in Tanzania managed by our Honeyguide Foundation partners), and approximately 280 rangers in the wildlife security network managed and/or funded by BLF. This provides comprehensive coverage across the Amboseli-Kilimanjaro-Tsavo landscape.

On the Kenyan side of the ecosystem, there are 22 permanent ranger outposts, four mobile units, a Rapid Deployment Unit (RDU) and two permanent observation posts (OP's) covering a total of 1,678,000 acres (679,000 hectares). However, there are still areas with insufficient attention and we need to expand our coverage by adding an additional two to three outposts in the upcoming quarters. We are actively fundraising for this effort; if you are interested please email donations@biglife.org for additional information.



Map: BLF areas of operation in Kenya and Tanzania. Orange dots represent BLF ranger outposts, black cars are mobile units, and orange stripes are areas covered by the RDU.

Incidents and Arrests

Crime category	Crime type	Number of incidents				Number of suspects arrested			
		Jul	Aug	Sep	Total	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Poaching	Trophy poaching	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	3
	Game meat poaching	0	2	2	4	0	6	5	11
	Trading in wildlife trophies	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Intention to poach	Possession of snares	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
	Possession of hunting gear	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	2
Habitat Destruction	Charcoal	3	2	1	6	9	3	0	12
	Wood carvings	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	3
	Logging	1	0	3	4	3	0	12	15
	Intention to log	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
Encroachment	Illegal grazing	1	1	2	4	1	8	5	14
	Illegal water pumping	1	0	2	3	4	0	5	9
	Unknown intention	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Community Crimes	Possession of narcotics	2	0	1	3	2	0	3	5
	Giraffe killed by speeding vehicle	1	0	0	1	4	0	0	4
TOTAL		14	6	12	33	30	18	32	83

ITEMS RECOVERED IN ARRESTS

Item	Total
Bullet cartridges	8
Elephant tusks (full)	2
Axe	11
Hand saw	2
Chain saw	2
Bhang (cannabis)	56Kg + field
Vehicle>5t	2
Vehicle<5t	1
Predator skin	0
Charcoal bags	13.5

Kadoo	1
Knife	10
Machete	19
Motorbike	2
Jembe (hoe)	2
Snares	23
Spade	3
Water pumps	7
Wood carvings	100 + wood pieces
Bicycle	4
Torch	3

Two ranger trainings were conducted during the reporting period:

- 24th-27th July 2015: Twelve rangers were trained at BLF headquarters on the use of WILD, a smartphone-based real-time data collection application for field use.



- 24th-30th August 2015: Twenty-one rangers drawn from Kimana corridor base camps (funded by AWF) were trained on the use of WILD in Loitoktok town.



ELEPHANT INCIDENTS

No confirmed incidents of elephant poaching occurred within the BLF core area of operation (AOO) over the reporting period. In addition, our teams and informers participated in three incidents that led to **arrest of five trophy poachers**.

ELEPHANT MORTALITIES

Total dead: 10

Total dead *within* BLF's AOO: 3

Total dead *outside* BLF's AOO: 7

During the reporting period, **three elephants died within our AOO**. One adult male succumbed to spear wound injuries inflicted along the international border of Kenya-Tanzania. The exact reason is unknown but it is suspected to have been the result of a conflict with humans. The second mortality was a young female who was unable to eat due to a severely infected trunk believed to be the result of a natural cause. The third incident occurred in Tanzania and BLF teams from both countries confirmed the cause as human-elephant conflict (HEC). In all three incidents, the tusks were recovered and handed over to Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA).

Seven other elephants died in areas bordering our AOO. In the worst single incident, six elephants were poached inside Tsavo West National Park and the ivory was transported across the border into Tanzania. The other death occurred on Kuku group ranch. All details are included below.

Details on all elephant deaths (within and outside BLF AOO):

- *7th July 2015*: Mobile 1 team were informed of a four-day-old carcass at Esoit-Puss area of Kuku group ranch. Mobile 1 visited the site and confirmed the incident and that the ivory was missing. The adult male died of a gunshot. Investigations by Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust (MWCT) rangers led to the arrest of one suspect.
- *27th July 2015*: BLF received information from KWS that gunshots were heard inside Tsavo West National park on the night of 27th, and that an immediate search by KWS had yielded nothing. The following morning (28th) units from KWS Komboyo and Taveta; and BLF's RDU, Rombo team and Dog Unit were dispatched to the area. They discovered carcasses of three female (various ages) and two adult male elephants, tusks missing (*pictured below*). Cause of death for each individual was gunshot wounds. A combined BLF/KWS team (including a tracker dog from each organisation) tracked the suspects to a Maasai homestead in Ziwani where two axes and a handsaw smeared with blood were recovered. Two suspects were arrested at the manyatta and admitted to having been among the seven-member team that killed the animals. The BLF RDU arrested another suspect in nearby Kimana town who was trying to escape in the early hours of the following night (29th). Subsequent interrogations identified the other four suspects as Tanzanian nationals who escaped with the tusks into Tanzania. An aerial patrol by Tsavo Trust discovered the sixth carcass three days later, three kilometres from the rest.



*Top left: Elephants killed by poachers in Tsavo NP, Top right: weapons found in suspects home.
Bottom: Suspects arrested were part of the Tsavo elephant poaching gang.*

- *2 August 2015: An off-duty ranger received a report of an elephant carcass on the Tanzanian side of the international border. A team was deployed to the site and confirmed that the male animal died on the night of August 1. It was established that the animal succumbed to spear injuries inflicted during crops raids in Tanzanian farms. The tusks were removed and taken by TANAPA (pictured below).*



- *15 August 2015*: Esiteti team came across the carcass of a male adult elephant whilst on patrol. It died of 3 spear wound injuries to the chest and stomach. It is suspected that the elephant was speared during conflict over water along the Kenya-Tanzania border. Both tusks were intact and were handed over to KWS Amboseli (*pictured below*).



- *26 September 2015*: BLF's Mobile 3 unit was informed of a female elephant calf that had died due to an infection of its trunk. The small tusks were removed by KWS Amboseli.

ELEPHANT INJURIES

Treated: 3 – by the KWS/David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) mobile vet

Not treated: 3

Details

Treated:

- *24th July 2015*: Treated by KWS veterinary unit for a spear injury on the right upper side of the stomach.
- *5th August 2015*: Esiteti team on patrol came across an elephant that appeared to be in pain and not moving. On observing it closely they noticed it had a spear wound on the rear right side of the body near the spinal cord. KWS veterinary unit was notified and treated the animal. BLF rangers monitored it until it appeared to have fully recovered and the wound healed successfully (*pictured overleaf*).



- *17th September 2015: An adult bull elephant was treated for three spear wounds; one on the chest and two on the upper stomach/hip (pictured below).*



Not treated:

- *5th July 2015:* Lemomo team while on patrol came across an elephant that was limping and seemed injured on the hind right leg. Together with KWS Amboseli they tracked the animal but did not manage to find it.
- *20th July 2015:* The Ol Donyo team sighted an animal at the Ol Donyo Lodge waterhole that appeared sick but treatment was deemed unnecessary. They monitored the animal until it recovered.
- *21st September 2015:* An elephant that had previously been treated on 23rd June for a spear wound on the leg was reported to have been seen having difficulties walking. Search teams were unsuccessful in finding the animal.

ELEPHANT RESCUES

Details:

- *29th July 2015*: A very young calf was found near to the area where poachers killed six elephants on the 27th of June. He was airlifted by the DSWT but unfortunately died at a later time.



BUSH MEAT POACHING

Poaching of animals for bush meat continues to be a threat to wildlife throughout the ecosystem, especially in areas with high densities of both people and wildlife as well as along the extreme edges of BLF's AOO in areas that have little wildlife protection. Over the reporting period BLF rangers **arrested a total of 14 suspects** in the BLF AOO, for killing wild animals listed in the table below.

Month	Zebra	Bush buck	Giraffe	Gerenuk	Impala	Total
July	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aug	-	-	1	-	1	2
Sep	1	1	2	2	-	6
Total	1	1	3	2	1	8

Details:

- *19th August 2015*: BLF's Mobile 3 on joint patrol with Mailua conservancy rangers arrested one suspect who had killed one pregnant impala. He also had 1kg of *cannabis sativa* (bhang), one machete, one knife and a snare.

- *25th August 2015*: BLF RDU and Rombo teams arrested five suspects who had killed one giraffe.
- *9th September 2015*: BLF Mobile 1 unit and MWCT rangers laid an ambush following reports of frequent game meat poaching at Inkisanjani area of Kuku group ranch (managed by MWCT). They arrested three suspects who killed two giraffes, one zebra and two gerenuks.
- *29th September 2015*: BLF Rombo team laid an ambush and arrested two suspects who killed one bush buck.

DE-SNARING

Twenty-three snares were recovered over the reporting period (selection of images overleaf). 17 were discovered in the field and destroyed by BLF rangers, and investigations to identify the poachers are underway. The remaining six were confiscated from arrested suspects.



HABITAT DESTRUCTION

Thirty-two suspects were arrested in 12 habitat destruction incidents over the reporting period. Logging (*pictured below left*) and charcoal production (*below right*) represent the majority of the incidents (11).



COMMUNITY CRIMES

Five suspects were arrested in three incidents for growing and possession of cannabis. A total of 56 kgs of cannabis were recovered during the arrests and a farm was destroyed. The cannabis farm and the farmer arrested are pictured below.



PROSECUTIONS

BLF staff monitor all wildlife crime prosecution cases for suspects arrested by BLF rangers to ensure that cases come to term and there is no corruption involved in the final outcome. Full details of all ongoing and recently concluded cases are provided in the table overleaf. Three wildlife crime cases concluded during the reporting period:

- One person who had been arrested for intention to poach was sentenced to serve six months community service at a public primary school.
- One Tanzanian national who had been arrested for killing two dikdik antelope and two porcupines for game meat was sentenced to serve a three and a half year jail term or pay a fine of Ksh 450,000 (or approximately \$4,500)
- Four people who were arrested for trading a leopard skin were each sentenced to serve a six-year jail term or pay a fine of Ksh. 1,000,000 (or approximately \$10,000).

Date of Arrest	No. Suspects	Crime	Bond per person (USD)	Status	Remarks/Outcome
6-Jul-13	1	Trading in ivory	\$300	Pending	Suspect out on bond. Case ongoing
5-Jul-14	1	Intent to poach		Closed	Six months community service
26-Jul-14	2	Trophy poaching - killed one elephant	\$1,000	Pending	Suspect out on bond. Case ongoing
1-Sep-14	3	Game meat poaching - killed one eland	\$3,000	Pending	Arrest warrant issued for one suspect who was out on bond. Two suspects still in remand
12-Nov-14	3	Game meat poaching - killed three gazelles	\$1,000	Pending	Ongoing. Arrest warrant issued for one suspect who skipped bail
25-Dec-14	1	Game meat poaching - killed three gazelles & four dikdiks	\$5,000	Pending	Suspect remanded. Government chemist to submit report to confirm that carcasses were indeed wildlife.
11-Jan-15	3	Game meat poaching - killed one dikdik	Not recorded	Pending	Out on bond. Case ongoing
13-Feb-15	1	Game meat poaching - killed two porcupines & two dikdiks	\$4,000	Closed	Date: 11/08/2015: 3.5 years jail term or Ksh 450,000 fine
16-Mar-15	8	Game meat poaching - killed one eland	\$1,000	Pending	Ongoing. Suspect never appeared on 7/05/2015
31-Mar-15	4	Laying snares		Pending	Case ongoing
24-Apr-15	2	Spearing elephant	\$1,000	Pending	Suspects out on bond. Case ongoing

17-May-15	1	Game meat poaching - killed three grant gazelles, one impala & two dikdiks	Not recorded	Pending	Suspect remanded. Case ongoing
7-Jun-15	4	Trading in leopard skin	Not recorded	Closed	Ksh 1m fine or six year jail term, each
11-Jun-15	2	Poisoning - killed one lion	\$1,000	Pending	Case ongoing
09-Jul-15	1	Trading in ivory	\$10,000	Pending	Suspect remanded. Case ongoing
29-Jul-15	3	Trophy poaching - killed five elephants	\$20,000	Pending	Suspect remanded. Case ongoing
07-Aug-15	1	Intent to poach	Not recorded		Suspect remanded. Case ongoing
19-Aug-15	1	Game meat poaching - killed one impala	Not recorded		Case ongoing
25-Aug-15	5	Game meat poaching - killed one giraffe	\$8,000	Pending	Case ongoing
09-Sep-15	3	Game meat poaching - killed two giraffe, one zebra & two gerenuk	Not recorded	Pending	Case ongoing
29-Sep-15	2	Game meat poaching - killed one bushbuck	Not recorded	Pending	Case ongoing

Table: Ongoing and recently concluded wildlife crime cases being monitored by BLF staff

RHINO PROGRAM

The total **population of rhino** in the Chyulu Hills is **7**. All individuals are **healthy**.

Ongoing efforts to obtain IPZ (Intense Protection Zone) status, required for inbound rhino translocation, are progressing well. It is vital that the remaining rhino continue to prosper in order for this to be achieved. As other rhino habitats in Kenya reach carrying capacity, the future of the Chyulu Hills as black rhino range becomes more and more important for the survival of the species.

In order to qualify as an IPZ, the Chyulu Hills area needs to meet a minimum level of requirements, mostly to ensure that the rhino population (whether it be augmented by inbound translocations or not) receives sufficient protection and monitoring (and will continue to do so). The requirements yet to be fully met are the fencing of the eastern boundary of the Chyulu Hills National Park (which is bordered by a large community), upgrade of the road network, installation of an additional water point, and an increase in available security-specific manpower. BLF is continuing to fundraise for the above and together with key partners hope to achieve IPZ status by the end of 2016 if possible. However, there are still significant funds necessary in order to achieve this. Please email donations@biglife.org if you are interested in supporting this effort.



RHINO INCIDENTS

MORTALITIES

The rhino program suffered a significant setback in September when Bahati (*pictured below with snare*) died after being caught in a snare that had been laid specifically targeting a rhino. Bahati had already survived one poaching attempt last year when his mother (Nasha) was killed and he was shot through the

neck. Against all odds at that young age, Bahati managed to survive that ordeal only to be caught in a snare in early September this year. An extensive operation to first find and then treat Bahati was launched. He was found within four days, but very unfortunately the combination of the infected wound, stress, heat and anaesthesia was too much for his severely weakened body to recover from.



This was devastating for the rhino teams and all BLF staff - the rhino population of the Chyulu's had just gone 12 months without a rhino mortality for the first time in five years.

With the negatives comes one positive - the operation to find and dart Bahati was complicated, involving spotter planes, a helicopter, 40 rangers, and veterinary logistics. The level of co-operation between stakeholders was incredible to be a part of. Tsavo Trust, DSWT, BLF, KWS and even Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) all assisted in the operation. There is no doubt that without this teamwork, we may never have found little Bahati.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

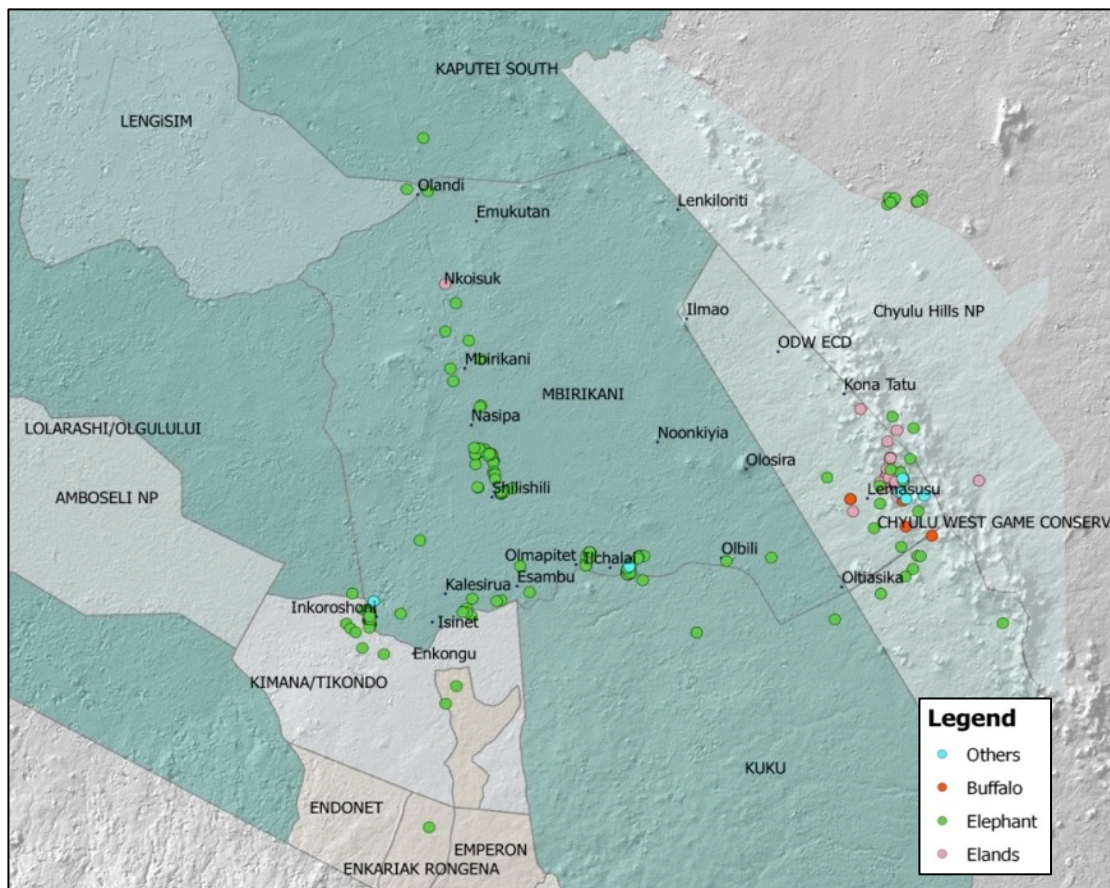
In an effort to improve monitoring and security BLF rangers in the rhino area are being trained on smartphone-based data collection tools. This will contribute to a better understanding of rhino movements and improve future management and planning of ranger patrols.

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), and specifically **Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC)**, continues to be the **most significant threat** to the on-going conservation of wildlife within the Amboseli Ecosystem. Incidents in which humans and/or wildlife are injured or killed appear to be happening more regularly. This is partly due to the dry conditions, bringing humans and large animal species into more frequent contact, and may also be exacerbated as human and wildlife population numbers are increasing.

CROP-RAIDING & HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT

Crop-raiding by all species over the reporting period was relatively high; elephants are by far the most regular offenders (see table overleaf). All agricultural areas in the ecosystem were affected, but those in close proximity to natural water sources (e.g. Esambu and Ilchalai) suffered the highest intensity of HEC. Water is no longer reaching the lower stretches of the main river (due to excessive illegal water pumping for agriculture), meaning that wildlife looking for water must move upstream, passing through farmland and other areas of intense human population, thereby exacerbating the situation. Due to the same dry conditions, conflict on the slopes of Kilimanjaro was virtually non-existent over the reporting period as most crops were already harvested by July.



Map: Areas impacted by wildlife crop-raiding in the Amboseli ecosystem.

Out of a total of **230 crop-raiding incidents recorded, elephants were responsible for 176 incidents**, with resultant damage to an estimated 170.7 acres of cropland of various crop species. The total estimated area destroyed by all wildlife species over the reporting period was 198.95 acres.

Number of incidents and area of crops destroyed per animal species (in some cases two species were found in the field at the same time):

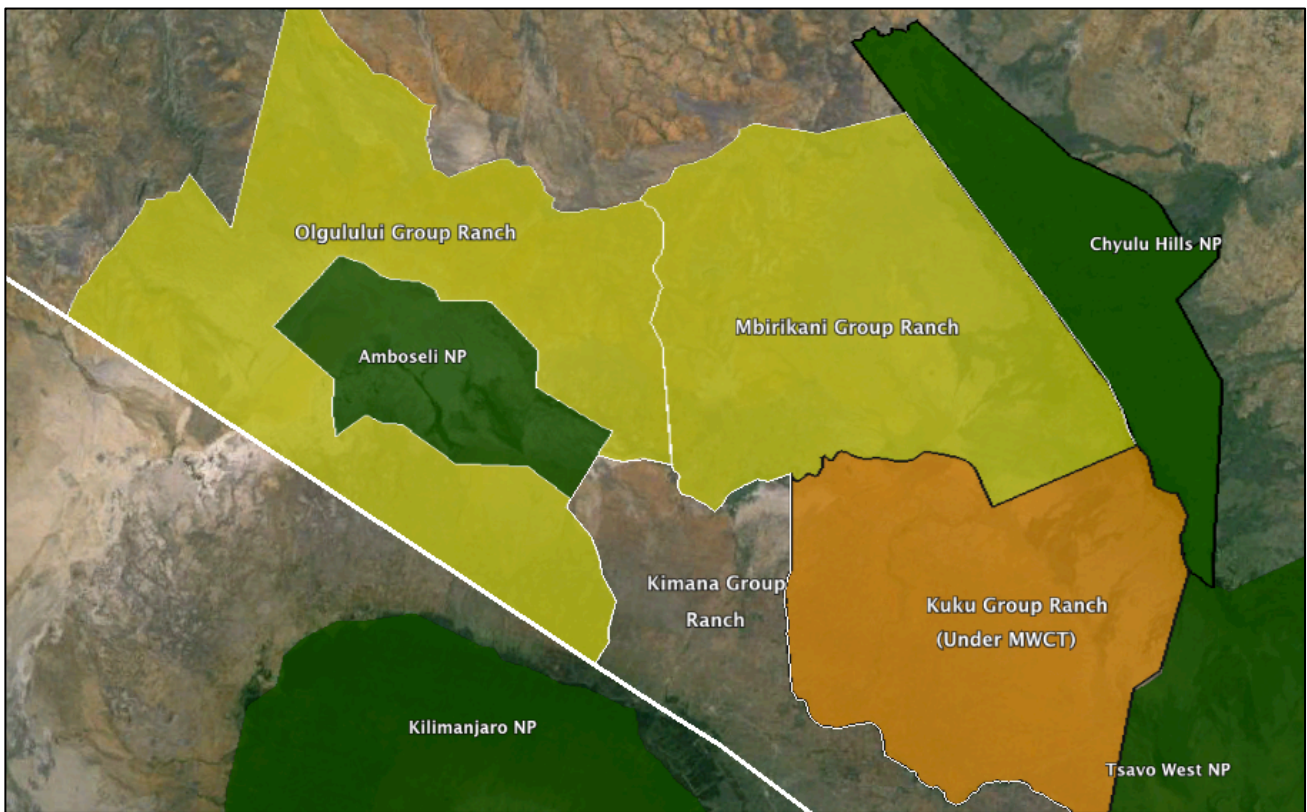
Animal	Incidents	Area damaged (Acres)
Elephant	176	170.7
Eland	31	11.0
Zebra	13	11.75
Buffalo	3	1.0
Zebra & Gazelles	2	1.25
Warthog & Eland	2	0.5
Wildebeest	1	2.0
Hartebeest	1	0.5
Eland & Giraffe	1	0.25
Total	230	198.95

Number of incidents and area damaged per crop species:

Crop	Incidents	Area damaged (Acres)
Tomatoes	111	124.95
Maize	79	44.625
Beans	23	13.5
Watermelons	12	13.25
Peas	3	0.875
Capsicum	2	1.75
Total	230	198.95

PREDATOR PROTECTION PROGRAM

BLF protects all the major predators of the Amboseli ecosystem through an innovative predator protection program on two group ranches. The core component of this protection program is livestock compensation (the Predator Compensation Fund or PCF), aimed at reducing the motivation for retaliatory killing of predators following livestock depredation. The fund pays livestock owners for a portion of the value of their livestock lost to predators, on condition that no predators are killed in retaliation. BLF staff verify all depredations, and penalties are applied for poor husbandry. The community provides 30% of the total compensation paid bimonthly (every 2 months), and fines are applied if any predators are killed in PCF areas (Mbirikani and Olgulului group ranches, see map below). MWCT runs a similar program on neighbouring Kuku group ranch.



Map: Ranches covered by predator compensation in the Amboseli ecosystem

The second part of the BLF predator protection strategy is focused on the warriors (morans) of the Maasai community, and is known as the Menye Layiok program. In Maasai culture, lion killing has traditionally been an important part of becoming a man. We have worked with partners to create the Maasai Olympics, a culturally relevant sporting event for warriors across the ecosystem, to give young men an alternative avenue through which to demonstrate physical prowess. The lead-up to the event is combined with a targeted education program aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour to wildlife and conservation. This series of events take place every two years (next in 2016), but education meetings with the warriors continue to be held intermittently.

It is important to note that while PCF is the fulcrum of BLF’s predator protection efforts, the BLF security network also play an important role. BLF’s rangers, informers and PCF personnel have worked together to stop **6 lion hunts** over the reporting period. For majority of these incidents, nearby conservation NGO Lion Guardians were present and assisted, while KWS have also assisted on the occasions where they were able to attend (most lion hunts have occurred far from KWS stations).

NOTABLE INCIDENTS

- *11th September 2015*: An adult lioness was roaring continuously near a homestead at Oldule community on Olgulului group ranch and would not leave the area even when chased by the local people. Scared villagers threatened to kill the animal. Combined efforts of BLF Esiteti, Ilmarba and Lemomo teams managed to stop them. KWS vet was called in and darted the animal (*pictured below*). It was trans located into Amboseli National Park.



PREDATOR COMPENSATION FUND

The table below details livestock killed by predators on Mbirikani and Olgulului group ranches between July and September 2015.

Predator	Cattle	Shoats	Donkeys	Amount (KSH)	Amount (USD)
Cheetah	2	45	-	113,000	\$1,130
Elephant	-	2	-	6,000	\$600
Hyena	30	168	5	449,150	\$4,491
Jackal	-	28	-	43,500	\$435
Leopard	-	3	-	9,000	\$90
Lion	2	12	-	56,000	\$560
Total	34	258	5	676,650	\$6,766

EDUCATION

BLF continues to provide support for local education both through facilitating sponsorship (ranging from primary school to university) as well as supporting schools with infrastructure improvement and paying teachers where necessary.

At this time BLF is **sponsoring** school fees for **140 students** and paying the **salaries for 27 teachers**.

All schools in the area were delayed in reopening for an entire month after the most recent vacation because of a countrywide teachers' strike. The strike badly affected all students in public schools in Kenya but thankfully ended on Monday the 5th October.

In infrastructure support, Enkijape School received four 10,000-liter water tanks, which will improve access to drinking water for students and faculty, as well as enabling Enkijape School to grow a small kitchen garden that will be a source of vegetables to supplement student meals. Orbili Primary School is currently testing two sample desks (pictured below), and should the desks be suitable all classrooms will be fitted with them. Two classrooms have been recently constructed at Lemasusu Primary School, and the opening ceremony took place on the 8th of August.





In student news, we are happy to report that BLF has received a generous commitment to fund the remaining medical school fees of Josphat Kasaine (pictured left). He is now in his fourth year of medical school, with three more years to graduate. His family have been unable to afford the ongoing fees, which will now thankfully be covered.

Josphat has confronted lions to protect his father's cattle, and during droughts, when they lost nearly the whole herd, the future seemed bleakest. He realized that the one thing that the lions and droughts cannot take away from him are the skills he's acquired through formal education, and that he can use these skills to serve his wider Maasai community.

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

The work detailed above is made possible thanks to the generosity of Big Life's donors and partner organizations, many of which are listed below. We are continually grateful for this support.

