

Project work Kenya

from July 11 to August 11, 2012



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August 2012

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Stage 1: Lake Naivasha

Wednesday, July 11th

The night was short and the head still turned from unfinished, the alarm clock released and - yes, finally we could get into the car and go in the long-awaited Kenya holidays! In Cham, Angi was waiting for us and three of us drove to the airport. The check-in, a Kafi and Schoggigipfeli and already we sat in the plane. The good seats were already taken, so we sat in the middle of the quad, but we had a good flight with film, sleep and entertainments.

At the airport in Nairobi we were able to stock up on cell phone credit and internet stick as well as shillings before Frederik, who was already waiting for us, drove us to the Miti Mingi Guesthouse. In the middle of the city traffic. Now we are here in a green island, the frogs croaking in the garden, we have ordered in the neighboring restaurant an Indian food, which will hopefully be delivered to us in the near future. And tomorrow we'll meet Munir and Shiv at ten o'clock and start the real adventure!

Thursday, July 12th

Yes, it is as it should be, as in our good ideas. We lie in bed in our little house in Elsamere, in front of it is our Land Rover, old but good, with the roof tent and everything that goes with it. Outside you can hear frogs, the camera trap is on the game. But let's start from the beginning:

Open your eyes in the middle of the green. Miti Mingi means "between the trees" and so it was. A small house, only a few rooms, a beautiful garden with many birds. And we first got a phone from Munir that our meeting would start only half an hour later, then we heard from Frederik that he would come later. It was great and we all met together in the café. After signing the formalities, we parted soon and we drove off as the first in the direction of Elsamere, which we

reached after one and a half hours. A lunch and then the cover of the cottage, shortly after our car came.



Of course, after the good and patient instructions, we could not let go for a spin and drove to Olodien, the favorite spot of February with its flamingos. Already on the way we discovered warthogs, impala and buffalo, but only a few of the flamingos were there. The water level is very high so that the algae can not be found. Back in Elsamere, we soon took two photo traps, then sat down with Shiv at the table and discussed the route planning, respective number of days (7 Naivasha, about 4 Baringo, about 4 Victoria) and our work.

After a shower we drove several hundred meters along the shore to Fishermans Camp. A beautiful, stylish Beizli awaited us, a beer and a megafeines food. The highlight, after all, was a hippo grazing a few meters from the fence, which we were able to see from very close. Now we enjoy peace, nocturnal noises and look forward to our boat trip, which starts at 7.00 clock.

Friday, July 13th

At 6.45 we were greeted with hot coffee from / at Shiv. At our jetty we boarded the outboard motorboat and Simon and Francis steered us along the green, papyrus-covered shorepapyrus-covered shore.



With the binoculars, but often also from the naked eye we tried to discover the white spots or the dark nests: African Fish Eagle, African Fish Eagle. The water level is very high at this time of the year, it is winter, so the birds feed faster and easier, which is why most of them breed now. Some call us or the boatmen with an imitation of their screams, which makes them aware, after which a fish, filled with some water hyacinth, so that he swims, they are thrown into the water, which is then hunted. Spectacular, as the beautiful birds approach, then target the fish, pull the claws forward and take the fish out of the water in a loose swing. The flight continues to the next lookout, where the fish is spiked. We count old, sedentary couples, single animals and young birds,



Animals that want to acquire new territories, and those who incubate their nests so diligently that even our fish can not lure them away. Each bird is entered by Shiv in a map, in the photo the ring is checked and so marked birds are identified.

On the shore and on the lake we discover a lot: pelicans, kingfishers, a group of beautiful Massai giraffes and an eland. Even the houses on the hilltops on the shore are spectacular and steeped in history from time to time. In total, we count around 50 birds on the 35 km that we have controlled. We are happy to have packed enough clothes in our backpack. In the morning we were almost ashamed because we had packed so much while Shiv came with the shorts and a sweatshirt, later we were able to resist the wind and the spray with our Windstopperrn and rain garbs well and came back to the shore reasonably warm.



We enjoyed lunch again at Fisherman's Camp, enjoying the tranquility, a bit more sun and warmth and the many birds. From the boat brought home, were first the photos and the camera trap's turn. This has caught us since yesterday afternoon zebras, baboons and a hippo and buffalo. It is really exciting here and we enjoy it to the full!

Saturday, July 14th

And again, the sun did not really want to shine in the morning and the photographers were not really happy. But our ride along the shore was all the more beautiful. The second half of the lake showed us another picture: through papyrus islands, past the flower farms, then along Crescent Island, a sanctuary where we saw wildebeests, zebra and giraffes, then the big swamp



along, which makes up a large part of the northern part. The pairs of eagles were rare or more common according to the existing environment: while the flower farms were left hardly tall trees on which nests can be built, the peninsula and the adjacent bay are a paradise: breeding grounds of fish, clear water, many trees - also of many tourists fed. So we had little chance for good photos, even if the light at that time would have been splendid, the eagles did not want to know anything.

In the swamps, we then met mainly young birds and loners, because there are the trees so far away that it is too difficult for parents to get food for young.

On our return, we almost immediately went on to eat at Fishermans Camp - our stomachs growled after the long morning. We then drove to Simon and Sarah, a bird of prey specialist who worked for the Peregrine Fund for sixteen years, and a widowed farmer whose hobbies are saving and breeding owls. The colonial mansion is beautifully situated just off Crescent Island, overlooking the lake and the small papyrus islands. The garden



is mowed by the hippos, gnus, giraffes and buffaloes should stay on the shore below the fence, which



not always works. The birds of prey, which have all found their home there - mostly temporary - are impressive: from the crowned eagle to various species of

owls and owls to the hawk, there are twenty-four birds. They are brought here as injured boulders, released after pumping up or medical interventions - sometimes after months, when too difficult injuries remain with their host parents. We drive home with lots of interesting new knowledge, a raptor trap and two little mice.

On the way home we can even at the ATM fill the wallet, with the refueling we wait, because the offered diesel is in canisters. Too unsafe for us and also too expensive. After a short stop, we went back to Fisherman's Camp and wait for the steak - the day was long and intense, tomorrow it should be just as exciting!

While waiting, Shiv explains his conclusions from the data collection:

We counted 133 Ospreys. This is the highest number in recent years, which corresponds to the level of water. This too has not been so high for a long time. However, there are still some animals more than the counted be, because just in the huge wetland we have seen only a small part, the animals we have counted were on the ground near the shore, in such a way could hide many more , In addition, at most animals that were on the flight, as well as the juveniles in the nests are not counted.

Shiv is of course very satisfied with the result. Nevertheless, the stock has shrunk dramatically compared to earlier times, which has to do with the flower farms in particular, with deforestation and human interference. But above all, Shiv wants to show that the number of existing African fish eagle is relative to the height of the water level - which is precisely reflected in the count.

Sunday, July 15th

Yes, we caught him, the African Fish Eagle, weighed and released! But that was actually a long and interesting thing and we felt like lions in Tembe and wild dogs in HIP - in contrast to local fishing attempts, patience was at least worth it today ... We started as usual, but immediately started to prepare in the boat the fish for the catch. Manfred copied Shiv, so we had two traps.



The fish was gutted, some pieces of papyrus gel stuffed in his belly and mouth, the belly sewn up so that he floats on the surface. With a pair of scissors, the four loops were pulled through the fish and opened. Already at the first Vöglen it started. A branch with a longer one



String serves as anchor. Attached to this is the fish trap. The bird is lured with whistles, then the branch and after laying out the string the fish is put into the

water. In fact, the bird sitting on its branch watching us comes flying almost without a flapping wing, turns and attacks the trap. The tension is huge and the breath is stopped. The bird discovers the snares and at the last moment he pulls in his immense claws and returns to the tree. With various couples to far along the shore we try again and again. Several times we seem to have luck, the



Birds attacks, grabs the prey and tears it away - but then he senses that the fish is too heavy and lets it go, or he can not withstand the power of the lines and lets the fish go - without his toes in the noose caught. This is how the morning and the noon pass, we turn around at the well fed ospreys in front of the tourist camps, where many boats feed their fish, towards the bay. Shiv knows his Pappenheimer well: there is the bird that never comes, these are new, we can try it, but they are not interested and this couple should be hungry, besides, they have to provide a baby. But it just does not work. We decide to drive to Hippo Point, if we are unsuccessful until then we want to turn back.

When we try it with a pretty guy, another animal suddenly shoots from the other side. While Shiv says that this bird completely trusts them, the eagle already grabs the fish and catches itself in the loop as planned. The middle claw is stuck. The eagle falls into the water, flutters with its long, strong wings, the claws are firmly anchored in the fish. He does not give him a prize, Shiv has to wrest him from him. A falconer's cap is pulled over his beak and his eyes, so the bird

becomes blind and uncertain, he lets himself be held. The catches are almost as big as the men's hands, the idea of being caught by such a claw makes one shudder. The beak, too, looks terrifying.



The feet are tied together, the eagle, which is already ringed, which thwarts the work that we actually wanted to do, hung briefly on the scale, which gives 3.5 kg. A powerful, powerful, healthy female. Shiv explains that this animal once wanted to bite his face.

After weighing, the bird is released from its hood, thrown away on the feet and back with momentum and tries to escape into the air. What he does not succeed because of his wet feathers. He lands on the carpet of water hyacinths, where he cleans and dries. We try it on the next bird, it seems to know the trap again and does not catch. So we return to Elsamere, where we enjoy a leisurely, relaxing afternoon and before the growling belly drives us back into the restaurant.

As evening work remains the setting of the camera trap, which showed us a pretty video of a bushbuck, the photos of some zebras, but otherwise not exciting. New place - new opportunity ...

Monday, July 16th

Today we saw Lake Naivasha from the other, the land side. A great, educational day. With luxurious sleep time we were allowed to appear today at 8.30 for

coffee and the subsequent departure at Shiv. Before that the camera trap was visited, which took funny videos of hippos, a warthog and bushbucks. We headed south / west and soon we took the climb to Crater Lake under the wheels.



Even there the water level is very high: the observation and restaurant hut, which is connected by a dock to the mainland, is under water, the lake, which is otherwise quite green and alkaline, is quite clear, the flamigos, which otherwise the lake are missing completely. Nevertheless, a wonderful spot. We enjoyed a coffee while watching many different species of birds. Shiv was already pretty disappointed. He had expected 10-12 Augur buzzards on this route, we had seen one, and still high in the air. Our two mice - a white named Obama and a brown named Romney - in a wire trap with many slings were ready for anything. From Crater Lake, we embarked on the first of many private road trips that Shiv made over the phone with the owners or their servants shortly before. This was impressive. Huge land on the shores of the lake, the private belong, beautiful houses, guest accommodations or even a hotel. In the parks we saw the whole Noah's Ark Kenya. The buzzards we wanted to catch played badly at the beginning, sat down next to the trap, looked at the mice, decided not to catch them, because something was wrong if they did not say goodbye. Or did not want to target the trap. So we rounded the lake more and more. In

Loldia, a beautiful piece of land, we finally got lucky: a long crested eagle sat on a tree, soon discovered our little mice and wanted to eat them immediately, but tangled as planned in the many loops, which were attached to the wire cage. As I held him, Shiv saw his beak, toes and claws, wings and leg length.



While my heart was throbbing with its powerful catches and sharp beak, the bird seemed to be calming down. Finally we christened him "Manny" and I let him fly to freedom. On the first tree he cleaned his feathers Barely a few hundred yards farther we had another victim in the eye: a young Augur buzzard first sat down next to the trap, but let himself be persuaded by his hunger to catch the little mice. He had made the bill without the host and sat down. Manfred was assisting with the data collection on "Simon" this time, and Shiv's mood improved tremendously as it was the first specimen of both bird species that he ringed. The time had already passed, the tank was scarily empty and dark clouds piled up.





In Naivasha Town we refueled, got some fruits and drank a beer. Shortly after this stop, the rain started and filled the already existing puddles again, finally it rained in torrents and along the road and ran over stairs brown streams and lakes emerged. In our car, it began to drip here and there and feet or back were wet. We drove back to Fishermans Camp and enjoyed fine filets. Before arriving here, Manfred got nervous: where could the room key be? Surely he had put it in his trouser pocket, but he is not there. Fortunately, there's a spare key, so we can go to bed ... Tomorrow we walk on Crescent Island and enjoy the Lake Naivasha for the last time in this intensity!

Tuesday, July 17th

By car we drove down to the visitor parking lot of Crescent Island. Along the shore we moved from tree to tree and searched and controlled the eagles, but especially the nests, with binoculars and the naked eye. The big piles on spreading branches in high acacias are built by the eagles in hard work. The branches are not picked up from the ground, but sought dead branches in the trees and brought there. When the nest is large and stable enough, the heads of papyrus plants are bitten off



and used as a peat material for oviposition. One pair has two to three nests, only one of which is active. A leisurely hike through giraffes, zebras, thomsons and wildebeest with newborn calves. One of the eagles we watch enjoys a fine meal on a large prey. On closer examination, we see a baby bug, obviously a stillbirth, because the fine, small hooves are soft and show no scratches from the first use. Later we will find two more such carcasses - there are no vultures or hyenas cleaning the carrion, so dead animals rot slowly. The landscape is beautiful, the weather pleasant, sunny but not too hot. We often roam through fresh herbs that exude their delicate scent. Small birds (crowned and blacksmith plovers) try to drive us out of their seats, protesting in flight, a crowned crane couple dancing the bridal dance, Egyptian geese complain to themselves. It is extremely peaceful, but Shiv learned from one of the park guards that somewhere on the east side of the island is a lonely, aggressive buffalo that does not like people. We must beware of him. Recently, Shiv had to escape from a buffalo by running away, he is now very careful.



When we find a nest, we look for food left underneath. The gill covers of carp, beaks and bones of birds tell us if anyone lives here. We actually meet the buffalo. From the top of the hill, he watches us from a safe distance and leaves us, who at first almost pause their heart, because we can not judge well what "close" means. After almost completing the round - to our astonishment we have hardly encountered lizards and small animals - we climb the summit of the hill, enjoy a few sips and the magnificent panorama. We can see the entire lake from

here. There are still some nests to control, the last ones in the country club area, a nice but very expensive hotel, where we eat a fine afternoon and cold beer, and make an evaluation of the exact record on Shiv's map. We counted 145 birds, including 25 young, 36 nests, of which 24 are active. Overall, the highest level in recent years. Good news, a feast day for Shiv.

In the afternoon we do a final round here in Elsamere, Shiv explains a lot. Then we check out here. 6 nights for us all three, three lunches on the first day, a lost key, for which we make a donation and the entire laundry fresh ready: about 230.- Francs. (The house costs us pp 10'000.- KSh, with full board would be 2500.-).

Towards evening we drive to Carnelleys, where the boys play billiard and ping-pong and I start to prepare the blog. Finally, we attach the camera trap to the nearest tree, watched by the guards, who ensure our safety, then we sleep until the rain and the voices of baboons and birds awaken and the time has come to pack. We leave some of our luggage here in Elsamere, so that three of us can drive to Baringo with everything we need.

Stage 2: Lake Baringo

Wednesday, 18th of July

The journey to Baringo begins peacefully. Our mice like to go back to their dogs, so we drive to Sarah Higgins and Simon Thompsett. A tea is offered and Sarah tells us stories about her raised birds of prey, pelicans swallowing spoons and her flower farm. A lively exchange between Shiv and her begins, because he sees in all flower farms an enemy picture, she thinks that one has improved a lot. Time flies and it's almost an hour and a half before we finally leave Lake Naivasha. For Manfred as a driver, the ride is not easy. Chugging, overtaking trucks, goats, cows, cyclists, motorcycles with meter-wide loads, in between donkeys and of course people.



Our car drives just under a hundred, at least when it's still a bit downhill. We still get money in Naivasha Town, then we stop in Nakuru, where we buy some food in the huge Nakumatt. From Nakuru the road becomes narrower and, above all, potholed. We pass Lake Bogoria without really seeing it, the road is now often marked by the rains of the last days, gravel is washed onto the road. In the afternoon we finally reach Robert's Camp. We've been looking forward to a little house, but some are now in the flood, the others are busy and so we are looking for a place to



set up our roof tent. Shiv installs himself in an igloo tent a few meters away. As soon as we have our tents ready, it begins to thunder and drip, not much later it

pours. At the fine Znacht, at which Erich, an African-experienced Dutchman in our age keeps us company, we joke that our tents will be dripping wet. At around 9:00 pm we will look for you and give each other the all-clear. Everything dry. The noise level around our clearing, which is very close to the flood, is huge. But it is not the numerous tourists, but the frogs, who play their music in different pitches. We still try to find the balance between a lot of air, little heat and even fewer mosquitoes, but then sleep a few hours ...

Thursday, July 19th

Together with Shiv, Erich and two boaters we start at 7.00 o'clock on the lake. The weather is pretty gloomy and surprisingly cool.



The landscape and the animal life on and around the lake are completely different than in Naivasha. The mood does not pick up just as it starts to rain. In the three hours we're out and about, scouring the rocky and woody, wild shores for cairn eaters,



we are counting five eagles right now. We see herons and kingfishers, but not very many, even the peregrine falcons that wanted to show us Shiv, make themselves invisible. On land we discover some groups of monkeys and Rock Hyrax jumping around in the rocks, otherwise everything seems a little bit extinct. The water in the lake is cloudy and brownish, at least when only clouds are reflected in it. Not at 12 o'clock but already at 10 o'clock we arrive at our car again.



A special spectacle awaits us: the Hippos are at war. Two males and a female stand on the lawn in front of the restaurant and attack. A spectacle with quite a volume and force, also impressive for the cheerleaders who cheer for their team in the water. We hear that the female and the young male do not belong here. Whether the other cop likes to take up the female in his harem and wants to drive away the young bull, possibly the son of the pretty, is not quite clear to us. In any case, the park guards help with the car a little, drive all hippos into the water, where they belong at this time and can thus ensure the safety of the guests again. For who wants to come under a lovestruck Hippo fighting for a female?





After a late breakfast we enjoy the increasingly sunny weather and the free time. We take a photo safari, sitting eternally and a little longer with dragonflies, eagerly nesting weaver birds and monitor lizards, which are due to the flood almost on the terrace of the adjacent hotel.



Since the film lecture Shiv did not want to give the boatmen about a released and immediately vanished African fish eagle is not happening, we can really enjoy the afternoon. I lie in this beautiful park in the hammock, Manfred and Shiv are with cameras on the way on search for a motive. The bird life here is very rich - especially when the sun is so glorious - and other small animals are many to find here meet me just the monkeys, which, I have yet to find out. But now I finally have to finish my blog for Peregrine Fund, so that I can do the first part of my obligations.

Friday, July 20th

The blog is sent to Munir, which was slow because of the slow line, but relieved me. Again, thanks to Erich, our new team member, we had an entertaining evening. But we did not go to our roof house too late,



We feel very comfortable in our tent. In the middle of the night I woke up because Manfred peeked out the window, because right in front of Shiv's tent peacefully grazed a hippo. We laughed heartily, because the Hippo should have disturbed the young Belgian couple, who had set up very, very close to Shiv's tent, less than the loud snoring that even came over to us ...

This morning, we drove a little later than usual, only at 8.30 clock, the lake. The picture presented to us today was completely different from yesterday's. The sun was warm and glorious, the different greens of the woods and shrubs were licking out the brown rocky slopes and our mood was superb.



The shore showed us next to the slopes on the islands and on the mainland pretty villages with round huts, but above all human and Tierleere marshy plains. We discovered many birds, including the dazzling "yellow crowned bishop", a colony of small swallows in the clefts and a breeding colony of cormorants and white herons. With fish that we bought directly from the fishermen on their pretty little Balsaholzbötchen (about 2-3 kg heavy), we attracted again some eagles. These are less spoiled here than on Lake Naivasha and are already in the air before the fish lands on the water surface.



In the afternoon, we witness the premiere of a short film about an osprey that has been injured and nursed into Sarah's rehabilitation center. In the densely populated Naivahsagebiet he had hardly had a chance on his own territory, so he was here on Lake Baringo, where the bird density is small and the inbreeding is large. Before that, he was glued to a sender with a range of about 10 km on the Hautprückenfeder. He immediately flew over the cliffs - and was never located or seen. It was interesting for us here to see how the cooperation of the organizations works or even that power games and competition make things difficult and prevent something. It was not easy to show the movie, because we came late from the lake and the ordered food was long in coming. What Shiv did not seem to notice so much. He gave a phone and announced our delay, saying that they were used to waiting. Casually he learned that there are problems with the laptop. So he took his, which was difficult to connect to the projector. The show was short and successful, Shiv hopes that he will continue to ring fish eagles and support.

The evening we enjoyed with good food and sitting together with Erich, in bed we were then from the "Burebüebli" and the old house of Rocky Dockey sung to sleep - or annoyed us also about the group Swiss, who sang until midnight, whistled, clapped and played guitar and drowned the voices of nature.

Saturday, July 21st

Today, getting up early and merging our house was announced. Already at 6.30 o'clock we went to the rock slope near the camp, where the local guide and ornithologist Cliff led us, because the Lanner falcon lives here.



To ring such a Shiv has made. On the way, we buy a young chicken for 200 shillings. Since we do not sight the hawks, we first take a walk and watch the songbirds awakening. Our heads are buzzing with all the names for the birdies that we can barely distinguish. There are hundreds of bird species here and as nonspecialists we are crassly overwhelmed. Finally, we discover one of the two hawks and provide the chicken with the trap. On a wire quadrant, eight slings are attached, which should tighten when the hawk hunts or eats. The Bible is attached to a string that provides some leeway, because the hawk hunts with momentum and can sweep the animal, which is why the stationary trap with the mice is not suitable. The hawk could get hurt here. The poor chick is sitting in the field and probably before it and we realize it, the hungry hawk is already approaching. Again and again he glides over the chicken and beats it in the flyby, finally he sits down next to it and takes a lot of time until he starts to tear it. Only when a pair of ravens wants to dispute his catch, he hurries more, also

makes an attempt to drive away the ravens.



Even though he walks around on the chicken and Shiv straightens the loops that have fallen during the short raids, we finally have to watch as the hawk flies away and leaves its prey to the raven. Finally, a black skirt sits in our loops, but we quickly free, admire and dismiss in the air. Just like Erich, whom we say goodbye after breakfast, on Monday he will be back in Holland. We enjoy lunch in the beautiful camp, observe the feeding table of the birds who are doing well, look for photo opportunities, take a nap in the hammock and write so that we do not forget all our experiences. Because tomorrow we have plans again and will relocate our location again ..

Stage 3: Lake Bogoria

Sunday, July 23rd

Already before the sun rises we can go back into the clefts and try again to catch one or even two of the hawks in a renewed attempt. The trap is - of course, after the provision of the cameras - placed in the right place. We make ourselves invisible behind the car and the waiting begins ... it takes two whole hours, during which we do not detect a wing beat of the hawks, then we break up and down. A short breakfast, billing with boatmen, bird guide and camping, then we make our way to Bogoria. On the way you can still shop in one of the lively little towns with market and many small dark shops.



Some fruits go into our car, then the two men go on wine search, I guard the car, which is surrounded by many smaller and bigger children, who "howyou" scream, laugh and wave. What a wonder, after some questioning, the men bring coke, water - and three cartons of red wine. Just in case. Again we take road, holes and rather no animals under the wheels. Soon we reach the gate of the Bogoria Reserves. William, with whom Shiv has already phoned, greets us. To our annoyance, Manfred is promoted to professor in Zurich. William begins to talk enthusiastically about his visit to Switzerland, where he has a partnership with an Appenzell community and lists the many similarities between the District Bogoria and Switzerland: cattle, mountains, lakes We drive to the lake, which has a high water level. The road to the campsite, which we have chosen, is under water, it is out of reach. Along the shore we drive south along the alkaline lake. The banks are pink lined and some flamingos enjoy the quiet swings on the lake. Our Land Rover hottert the natural road in Untersetzung along shaking and shaking, but finally brings us to the destination, the campsite at the southern end. It has nothing here.



Luckily we had spaghetti wrapped up at lunchtime, which we now fry on our gas grill and enjoy a fine dinner together with the red wine, accompanied by shouts of the flamingos high in the air, of which we do not find out whether they come or go. They travel at night, because they are protected from birds of prey. The darker the night the more fireflies, frogs and lightning. In thunderstorm mood and rain we fall asleep.

Monday, July 24th

The morning is so cloudy that we can not see anything from the Verraux eagles, who are supposed to circle above the steep precipice. We make our way back north, the mood with the flamingos is magnificent and at a bay we even find a african fish eagle.



Here, however, we are chased away after a short time, because BBC films here for a 3D documentary.



Too bad, but at least we were able to photograph him and recognize the pink complexion that distinguishes him from the eagles of the other lakes. He drinks so much carotene over the flamingos he feeds on that he blushes.

Stage 4: Lake Victoria

Monday, July 24th

After a stop at the gate and the futile attempt to get breakfast in the closed restaurant, we drive towards Marigat, Eldoret, Iten and on to Kakamega and finally to Kisumu. Our poor old lady moans and moans the mountains up to

2300 m, the gears drag and the progress is very leisurely. The engine that comes close to cooking is cooled on a mountaintop. It's rainy, much like lunges in rainy weather. For birds of prey it should be great, but we do not see any - maybe they are afraid of the dense population or they are hiding from the rain.

Once we open the bonnet to check if the V-belt is still good. Immediately we are surrounded by laughing faces, all know advice and many hands help. We talk to Roving Rovers, the car rental company, the remote diagnostics means to find the nearest gas station, refill oil, drive on. In pouring rain we eat kilometers and this time. At dawn we arrive in the 1.2 million city Kisumu and push our way through the streets and the traffic.





At the western end we let ourselves be guided by our landlord and pick up. More and more bumpy are the roads, more and more chickens, goats and calves are lying on our passage, lanes are barely visible. Finally, we end up at the bottom of the world. Some huts made of corrugated iron, stones and earth, cooking fires and faces that lighten up when we wave. We torture ourselves inch by inch under trees that endanger our roof tent until we finally arrive at a gate. Victor leads us into our dwelling: a tent for Shiv is placed in front of our entrance, we ourselves get a nice, spacious house, next to it is a kitchen house, even equipped with a fridge and a bath with shower and dry toilet. Although we are dead tired, we sit in the car and drive to a nearby restaurant, where we eat so well that it is our "Stammbeiz". Here we meet Tom, who will be our guide for the next two days.

Tuesday, July 25, 2012

In the morning we discover only correctly, in which beautiful place we landed here.



A nicely landscaped garden with many plants that attract hummingbirds and many other birds, right on the lake. But it's fast on the ship and on the lake.



A huge group of young people accompanies us, so that our 12-person ship is almost overloaded and very slow. We chug comfortably over the brownish water, to the small islands and to Ndere, then along the shore on the other side of the bay, before we cross the lake to return to Dunga Beach. We do not see much wildlife, even the eagles are rather sparse, but completely wild here and no one feeds them. No photos and no ring control. Tom knows a lot to tell, he knows the lake like the back of his hand, stories flow from it. We invite him and his wife to dinner, which is very entertaining. The next day he takes the lead again, shows us the shore in the direction of Kisumu, which is extremely populated. The city is dominated by a skyscraper, in which the district administration is housed, whose 14 floors until last year (probably 15 years) were not accessed by a lift. He was forgotten.



Kisumu used to have heavy shipping traffic with other countries (Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda) but this collapsed as currencies developed differently and under the reign of Arap Moi and his successor. The shipyard is abandoned, it used to provide jobs for 2,000 men. The big and smaller motor ships are rusty and mostly unusable there.

Impressive are the fishermen who are laying their nets with small, pretty sailing boats - whose sails are very handmade and partly made of tarpaulins with advertising. Although closed season and fishing would be prohibited. They wave and show us their catch ashore. A yield of about 200 shillings, divided by four men. Tom tells us about Fischer-Aids: the women are waiting for the fish to fill their hungry mouths. Since there is less fish than need, the fishermen sell more expensive: money and sex, today with one, tomorrow with the next woman. So HIV is spread here in no time, everyone knows it, nobody protects.

In the evening we are in trouble, once again Shiv receives a text message asking for money. Yesterday we should have fed the young people, today Tom asks for a tip. Since we did not ask him to accompany us and invited him to a generous dinner, we find Shiv's recommendation to make Tom's 5000 Sh for about 50, as inappropriate. We come into the discussion about Shiv's expectations. The first night, we made it clear to him that we had a budget and everything went to his unused account. He eats, drinks and has been sleeping at our expense for fourteen days, with Munir we have a figure of around 12-1600.- Sfr, similar to other projects, settled per person. At the moment, it looks like about 600 would be left for Shiv. When we call him that number, he seems disappointed, and when asked what he expects, he puts out the figure of \$ 1,000 / \$ 1,500 he was expecting. We, who think we are extremely generous, are appalled. But after the trouble we deal with the matter again and decide to pay it. He did his job very well, we enjoyed Kenya's first-class and affordable holidays and our expectations were completely fulfilled. Nevertheless: a dull aftertaste, again and again you feel used, this mentality is just difficult to understand. I had the bitterness to lose a team member and get an employee for it. It's a pity, but in the end we all benefited and the mood should stay as positive as we had it until the end.



Wednesday, July 26th

Today we are free. Washing, arranging photos, writing a blog and repacking is the order of the day. We enjoy the great garden and the cosiness, the laundry flutters in the wind and we look forward to the rest. With Ndajya we have phoned, that seems to work, he is a funny guy and has already chatted us both on the phone. Manfred will be keeping cows with the boys, I'll chatting with the women. This is going to be adventurous ... we hope that we can still clarify the cost of our campsite and any guided tours in the Massai Mara, so we do not go back into the trouble trap and at the end of the hollow hand displaces the friendship salute.



Friday, July 27th

A day in the right jungle - Kenya's remaining part of the belt that once stretched from the West Coast to the East African coast. 240 square kilometers it is big and a real experience. We hiked through the forest for about six hours and walked through it on paths or roads, but did not travel very far. Again and again we stopped and searched, watched and enjoyed the small and large birds that swarmed in a variety and all color combinations. The sun suppressed the rain that accompanied us along the way and accordingly our mood increased, especially because already at the first step out of the car gigantic, chicken-like birds hopped in the treetops: big blue Turacos, already the first climax. Shiv discovers around 30 species of birds that he has never seen before, sometimes only here.





Together with our local guide, we saw squirrels and the beautiful and funny blue and colobus monkeys in addition to the countless birds. The giant trees and all shrub and bush species below are always impressive, as are their scents and the temperature difference between the glade and the forest interior. Of course, the Fuehrer's tales about the power struggles of the trees for light and space, their medical values, as well as the existing crawling and snake creatures are also interesting. Unfortunately we did not discover much of that. During the lunch break, we had a small wooden chalet, which was presented to us as a café, with half a chappatti, which saved us from starvation and tasted first-class.

The drive home was interrupted by a breakdown. Suddenly the red oil control light warned. Immediately we stopped and discovered that, although there was enough oil, only a tattered V-belt was available. Fortunately, our GPS showed us that the nearest gas station is only 2 km away, a distance that we managed well. For about an hour, up to four men put their heads and hands in the hood and replaced the broken piece. Let's hope that it will endure the Mara, we are glad that the V-belt broke today and not two / three days later.



In the best mood we enjoy the obligatory Natchos with guacamole in the restaurant of the Kiboko Bay Resort, where we are welcomed as regulars. During the night Ndajya calls and we clarify the prices - which are very mild except for park entry. We look forward to the Mara, certainly a different but equally adventurous world!



Saturday, July 28th

After a night in which the whole village in our area seems to have been amused by loud music until dawn, our little paradise right on the lake with lots of pretty hummingbirds write the last blog posts, so we send them to Munir in the evening and to complete our work as a volunteer. Then it's time to pack and clean up, so that we can take the road under the wheels already one hour before the scheduled time. From Victor's training center one last time the impressive bumpy country road, which gives an insight into the entire village life, then into the dizzy Kisumu.



On Sunday, everyone seems to gather in the market, which looks like an anthill. Shoes are in piles or hang on strings, clothes pile up, everyday objects are traded, everything lives. In addition, of course, stalls with tomatoes, sweet potatoes, the spinach-like leafy vegetables, which is here called "Suma Wiki" and together with corn semolina, ugali, the everyday dish par excellence.

Manfred already drives like a local - otherwise we would have twice as long. The route of about 300 km takes us through lively villages, sugarcane fields, tea plantations and coffee. Kericho is the center of the tea areas, where the workers are housed in pretty terraced houses. The beautiful but monotonous green stretches almost endlessly over the hills - which are actually mountains, because

we pass the highest point at 2550 m, so far higher than our tree line or roads. It rains here every afternoon. We can do it dry, buy something in a shop



and drive straight on. Bypassing a construction site, the road we widened here, costs us even more time. Finally, we make it to Nakuru, where dark clouds start to concoct and begin to discharge as we arrive in the vast Nakumatt, where we stock up on the Masai Mara with non-perishable food that does not need refrigeration. This is not so easy when standing in the midst of fine meat or dairy products that let the water flow in the mouth. The heavily used main road towards Nairobi calls Manfred then again violently, the Matatus, minibuses that stop everywhere and passengers and goods load and unload, as soldier ants want to attack the road. In addition, trucks and buses that race and overtake suicidally or drag their chassis so twisted that the rear wheels are half a meter from the track of the front wheels. After turning towards Lake Naivasha and Elsamere, it becomes more leisurely and we are happy when the first giraff greets us. We look forward to more nature - the vastness of Kenya has hardly any animals outside the protected areas. Birds of prey we have hardly ever seen, maybe three, four in the hundreds of kilometers traveled, a crown crane I could discover, in addition waterfowl, which are common and a huge number of small birds. We could watch them for hours. Every species, sometimes every subspecies, has their plants, on which they settle down.

After a short stop to unpack and (again or once warm) showers in our house, we drive to Fishermans Camp to eat really well again before we dive into the countryside and wildlife. We are happy that by the end of our volunteer time everyone seems happy with the whole thing: Shiv has received his reward, thanks, praise and the promise to continue to support him, already partially implemented in his ideas in the blog of the Peregrine Fund Blogs mentioned and called for donation. In the end, we still enjoyed cheap and really great, adventurous and educational days, which are not quite comparable with other projects. So: goal achieved, we all won!

Post script

Our Kenya trip in the spotlight:

Tops:

- Capture of birds of prey for ringing and surveying
- Experience the diversity of Kenya
- Great Migration and big cats in Mara NR
- roof tent and our old lady (with all surprises)
- Baby towels for clean hands

Flops:

- "Hollow Hand" mentality and corruption tarnishes warmth and kindness
- Road from Narok to the Mara National Reserve
- What's right here, which story should one believe? Everyone knows everything ...
- Purchased and forgotten home road maps ;-(

The most helpful tools:

- Garmin GPS with Map Tracks for Africa
- Power charger and tire pump via cigarette lighter
- Sleeping bags, hammocks, rain gear

recommended:

- Lake Naivasha (Elsamere, Fishermans Camp and Carnelleys) and Lake Baringo (Roberts Camp) with fine food and good accommodation

- Lake Bogoria for individualists who do not need anything
- El Pariso in the Mara for very flexible and undemanding self-drive