

## Kenya May 14, 2023, Nairobi National Park

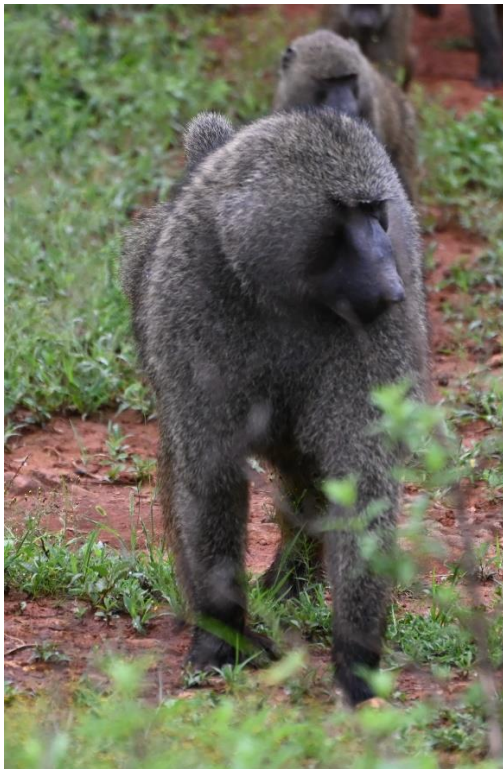
I've decided to break this trip up into individual days to make it more digestible. The entire trip spanned from May 13-28, 2023, and most days were filled with mammals, which is one of the wonders of Africa. This trip was organized by the Tropical Audubon Society in Miami and guided by Cisticola Birding and Nature Tours in East Africa. I cannot praise Cisticola enough, and though we were primarily a birding trip (we ended with a checklist of just over 500 birds), the wealth of mammals observed was outstanding, with a checklist of 52 species and subspecies. Our guide Alex was a font of information and knew where to find wildlife.

Ever since I read Gerald Durrell's [The Overloaded Ark](#) as a teen I had been drawn to the explosion of life that Africa holds, and this trip, though over a year past, is still fresh in my mind. We visited about 2/3 of Kenya, so climb aboard the safari vehicle and spot some mammals with me.

Our first full day in Kenya had been spent birding in our camp in Nairobi, with an afternoon trip to Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary led by Alex, with no mammals. Our sole mammal was heard late at night, and the **Southern Tree Hyrax's** screams were loud and eerie.

Early the next morning we headed out to Nairobi National Park, which butts up against the south of the city. At the gate we had to stop so Alex could clear our paperwork with the guards (this happened at all parks, and rather than being downtime, we could wander about and start spotting wildlife in the vicinity). Once this was done we started down the road to adventure.

You first pass through a forested area, and before long we stopped for our first wildlife crossing, a large troop of **Olive Baboons**.





Soon we exited the forest and the savanna spread out before us. To our right was a small lake, and amongst the myriad birds and crocodiles **Common Hippopotomus** floated.



Soon after we saw two **Southern White Rhinoceros**,



**Common Impala**,

and **Coke's Hartebeest**.



Then one of us saw something special along another roadway and we changed direction and raced off to see a **Southern Lion**.



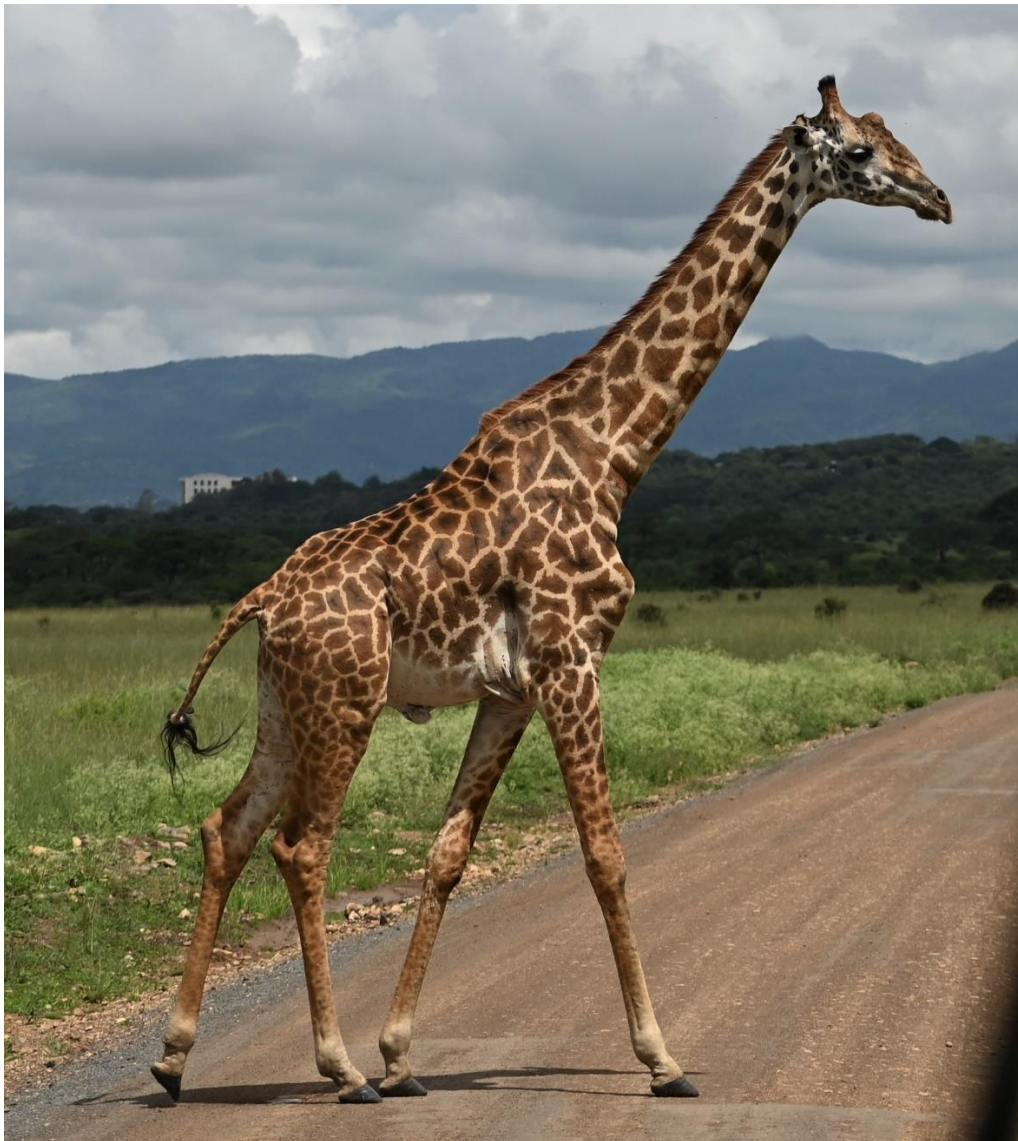
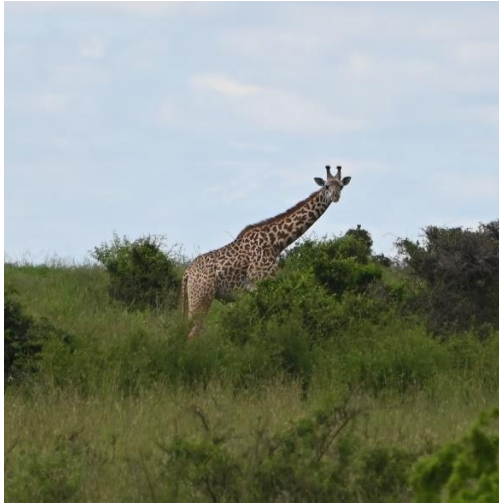
Nearby we passed a long deceased **Cape Buffalo**.



And more **Common Impala**.



Then a couple **Maasai Giraffes**.



At this point our mouths were almost constantly open in astonishment. This cornucopia of mammals were each being bookended by endless species of birds, including widowbirds and bishops that were displaying in breeding plumage, and also some reptiles, butterflies, trees, and grasslands giving a wild full picture of a vibrant ecosystem.

**Defassa Waterbuck:**



After a stop for lunch at a rest area where we could get out of the vehicle (in most of the parks there were limited areas for this, otherwise you were confined to your ride) we started up again and drove by a tree with **Hilgert's Vervet Monkeys**.

Then driving up a hill we found an **Eastern Black Rhinoceros**.



From this vantage point we could see zebras and antelopes on the other side of the hill, so we drove toward them and saw **Eastern Warthogs**,



**Southern Grant's Gazelles,**



**Grant's Zebras,**





Sparing male **Common Impala**,



and **Thomson's Gazelles**.



Driving on from this productive spot we finally saw a **Cape Buffalo** in the flesh.



Then more **Coke's Hartebeests**,



another **Maasai Giraffe**,



and a final group of **Southern White Rhinoceros**.



Leaving the park there were some **Olive Baboons** hanging around the gate, I'm sure looking for handouts. As we started on our way to Lake Naivasha, we were all excited from an outstanding day in the field with many more to come.

**Mammal list for May 14 at Nairobi National Park:**

Southern Tree Hyrax (*Dendrohyrax arboreus*)

Olive Baboon (*Papio anubis*)

Common Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*)

Southern White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*)

Common Impala (*Aepyceros melampus melampus*)

Coke's Hartebeest (*Alcelaphus buselaphus cokii*)

Southern Lion (*Panthera leo melanochaita*)

Cape Buffalo (*Syncerus caffer caffer*)

Maasai Giraffe (*Giraffa tippelskirchi tippelskirchi*)

Defassa Waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus defassa*)

Hilgert's Vervet Monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus hilgerti*)

Eastern Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornus michaeli*)

Eastern Warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus massaicus*)

Southern Grant's Gazelle (*Nanger granti granti*)

Grant's Zebra (*Equus quagga boehmi*)

Thomson's Gazelle (*Eudorcuas thomsonii*)