

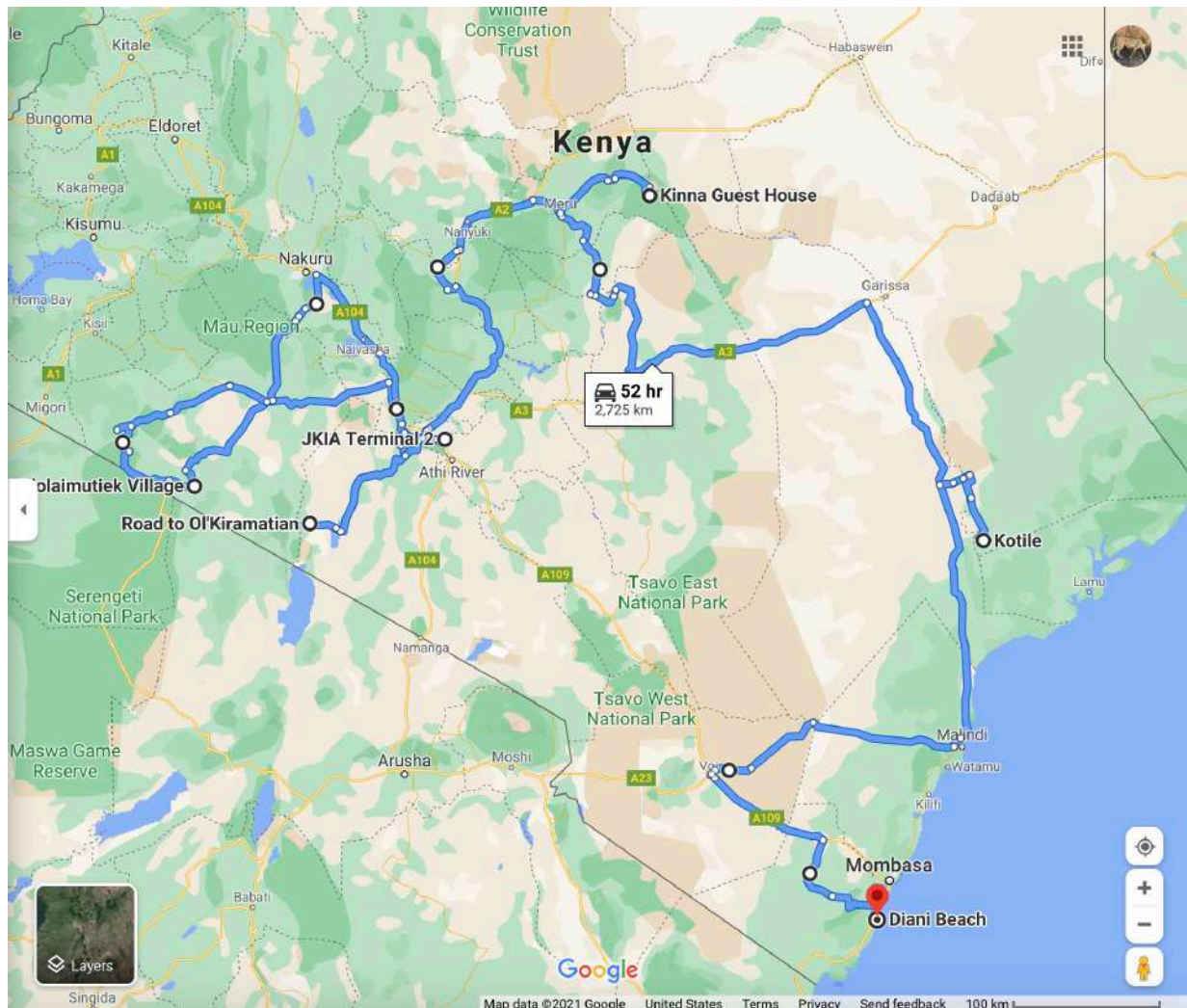
Mammals of Kenya

July 11-30, 2021

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I. Introduction

Seeing my first African Wild Dogs in Laikipia, Kenya, in 2013 was one of those defining moments that turned me into a mammal watcher. Ever since, I've wanted to revisit Kenya to specifically target its huge array of unique, endemic, and more obscure mammals. It has always been a bit surprising to me why Kenya is ignored by mammal watchers compared to, for example, South Africa. Kenya has 400 mammal species (vs. South Africa's 300) with a large number of endemics and East African specialties. Moreover, the country is a real melting pot of species from Central, North, and South Africa – nowhere else can you see Giant Forest Hog, Striped Hyena, and Sable on the same trip. There are lots of community areas and private conservancies where mammal watchers can do as they please and most interesting sites are packed into the southern 40% of the country, where roads are good and tourist infrastructure and accommodations are widespread and high quality. Despite all of these favorable qualities, most Kenyan reports are still standard safaris rather than hardcore mammal watching.

With 3 free weeks to do a substantial trip in summer 2021 and their (thus far) acceptable handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kenya was the obvious choice after a few other plans fell through. I had previously lined up a list of sites to visit, so now all I had to do was find the right guide. (As a side note, Kenya is NOT a self-drive destination, which is perhaps part of the reason why it is less popular among mammal watchers than southern Africa.)

By pure chance, I contacted Kenyan safari guide Zarek Cockar (zarekcockar@gmail.com) after seeing 1) a remarkably successful report from Arjan Dwarshuis's birding big year (the Kenyan portion of which Zarek co-guided) and 2) online reports featuring his success finding Naked Mole-rats. I wasn't sure how he would respond to my obscure and difficult list of targets, so it was a relief when he was keen to try. I could not have made a better choice! **I can't say enough good things about Zarek.** During planning, he was super responsive (we must have sent 100+ emails over the 4 months prior to the trip) and always keen to follow up on any leads I found, or liaise with his vast network of Kenyan safari guides and researchers to find new ones. I was also impressed to see that he used this trip as an opportunity to learn more about small mammals, really getting into species ID and taxonomy. Although I expected Zarek to have an encyclopedic knowledge of Kenyan ecology (as one of the country's few Gold-level guides), I also found logistics to be a real strength of his. With a few small exceptions, the entire (very complicated) itinerary went by remarkably smoothly.

I don't think I've ever met a guide who works as hard as Zarek did during the trip, with the possible exception of Juan Cruzado in Mexico. He was always happy to spotlight for 2+ hours every night, even after a 10-hour driving day. He's also super sharp in the field, great with the spotlight, and a very responsive and safe driver. And finally, I should note that he's a genuinely nice guy to travel with and both very conservation-minded and ethical around wildlife sightings. Although a tour with Zarek is not cheap, he is THE guide to hire for a trip to Kenya and will surely give you more mammals/\$ than anyone else.

II. Itinerary

After a lot of detailed discussion, I eventually settled on the following itinerary based on Zarek's input.

July 11: Arrive NBO 7AM (via SFO & Dubai) – Mt. Suswa – Soysambu (O/N Mbweha Camp)
July 12: Soysambu – Narok (for gas and food) – Nyakweri Forest (O/N Mara West Camp)
July 13: Nyakweri Forest – Mara Triangle – Masai Mara NR – Olderkesi (O/N Cottar's Fly Camp)
July 14: Full day in Olderkesi & MM NR + meet the Pangolin Project (O/N Cottar's Fly Camp)
July 15: Long drive (10h) from Olderkesi to Ol'kiramatian (O/N Lentorre Lodge)
July 16: Full day in Ol'kiramatian and Shompole Conservancies (O/N Lentorre Lodge)
July 17: Long drive (9h) from Ol'kiramatian to Mweiga (O/N Sandai Farm)
July 18: Full day in Aberdare NP (O/N Sandai Farm)
July 19: Mweiga – Nanyuki (breakfast) – Meru NP (O/N KWS Kinna Guest House)
July 20: Full day in Meru NP (O/N KWS Kinna Guest House)
July 21: Long drive (9h) from Meru NP via Mwingi to Tana River Primate Reserve (camping)
July 22: Tana River PR – Ishaqbini Hirola Conservancy (camping)
July 23: Ishaqbini – Watamu – Arabuko Sokoke NP & FR (O/N Turtle Bay Resort)
July 24: Full day exploring Arabuko Sokoke forest and nearby caves (O/N Turtle Bay Resort)
July 25: Watamu – Tsavo East NP (O/N Kulalu Camp)
July 26: Full day game drive in Tsavo East NP (O/N Kulalu Camp)
July 27: Tsavo East NP – Rukinga Conservancy (Wildlife Works) (O/N Ndovu House)
July 28: Rukinga – Shimba Hills NP (O/N Shimba Hills Lodge)
July 29: Shimba Hills – Diani (COVID PCR test) – Shimoni – Diani (O/N Sands at Nomad)
July 30: Fly Ukunda to Nairobi (NBO) – Nairobi NP – 12AM Departure NBO (via Dubai & SFO)

The actual itinerary we used was more or less the same with the exception of July 18, when we spent the night at the Creaky Cottage in Naro Moru following Jon Hall's success observing Maned Rat there. We had initially planned to spend July 12-14 visiting Saiwa Swamp NP (De Brazza's Monkey), Kakamega Forest (East African Potto + bats), and Kisumu Impala Sanctuary (mistnetting with Kenyan bat expert Dr. Paul Webala) but surging COVID cases in western Kenya and resulting restrictions (e.g. sunset curfew) made us change plans 2 weeks prior to the trip.

For the 2 nights' camping and our stay in self-catering accommodations at Meru NP, Zarek arranged a driver (Antony) and talented cook (Vincent). They came complete with a safari van packed with tents, other camping gear, and 4 days' worth of food and cooking supplies. This was a great plan, as it made our drives much more efficient by eliminating the need for a trailer. I'd specifically request Antony and Vincent if anyone else does a similar trip.

Out of respect for the amount of background research Zarek did to organize this trip, I'm leaving out the names & contacts for most local guides we used as well as some precise site info that's not already in the public domain. I don't even want to imagine the number of hours Zarek had to put in to get us to the right spots and people to find all our key mammals!

III. The results (Overview)

This was one of the most (perhaps the most) successful mammal watching trips I've ever done! We saw 126 species in 19 nights, which must be a record. Even more impressively, we achieved this total without using a single Sherman trap or mistnet and relying on bat detector IDs to a very limited extent. Importantly, I observed and photographed all of my top 10 targets: Golden-rumped Sengi, Tana River Mangabey, Tana River Red Colobus, Naked Mole-rat, Maned Rat, African Trident Bat, Harrison's Giant Mastiff Bat, Sokoke Dog Mongoose, Giant Forest Hog, and Hirola (wild herds in native range). But we also had an exquisite "supporting cast" featuring Rufous & Black-and-rufous Sengis, Somali Lesser Galago, Crested Porcupine, Southern Giant Pouched Rat, Giant Leaf-nosed and Heart-nosed Bats, 2 Caracals, melanistic Serval, Bushy-tailed and Somali Dwarf Mongooses, Striped Hyena, Weyns' Duiker, Mountain Reedbuck, and Desert Warthog among many, many more highlights. Among all these species, I saw a remarkable 8 new mammal families. Kenya is just an absolutely spectacular country for mammal watching!

We did this trip in the midst of somewhat unusual weather – a clear sign of our changing climate. July is supposed to be the "dry season" in most of Kenya, but we encountered rain at every site except Tsavo East! Luckily, it was typically drizzle or the odd short downpour so didn't impact mammal watching much. We also had at times exceptionally gusty winds along the coast and in Tsavo. According to Zarek, it was colder than usual in Nairobi, Nakuru, and the Masai Mara, which couldn't have helped either. For this reason I'd recommend future travelers plan visits to highland sites like Laikipia or Soysambu for the "warm dry season" (Jan-Mar).

The amazing thing is, however, that Zarek and I believe with a few itinerary changes, future trips could do even better! These comments should not be taken as criticism, but rather suggestions for improvement. If doing this trip again, I'd nix Olderkesi and instead spend an extra night at Mara West (exploring the Mara Triangle by day) and a night or two in Mara North or Naboisho conservancies (good general game with frequent Aardvark, Aardwolf, and Zorilla sightings on night drives). Enonkishu (Thick-tailed Greater Galago, Forest Dormouse, Mountain Reedbuck) is another potential option. Olderkesi was just very hard to access from productive parts of the main reserve, and night drives were very slow. The accommodation there was also a bit disorganized. That said we had to plan the Masai Mara portion of our trip with just 2 weeks to spare and keep the changes within budget so suboptimal choices were inevitable.

Additionally, I'd modify the Tsavo portion of our trip to do just 1 night inside the park (preferably at Voi Safari Lodge, Satao, or Ashnil Aruba) and stay 2 nights at Rukinga. Staying > 1 night in the park (at Satao or Ashnil) is only a must if you're relying on Tsavo to produce Hirola sightings. You'll see more notes on potential substitutions/worthwhile nearby areas scattered around the next portion of the report.

As a cautionary note for future travelers, I'd also ensure that availability of any special arrangements (e.g. walking safari, night drives, etc.) is confirmed verbally and in writing with on-site lodge staff (not off-site booking agents) prior to arrival. Although one would assume booking agents are kept up to date with this sort of info, this is not necessarily true, as Zarek and I have now learned...

Finally, Zarek and I both agreed that it would have been better to have a separate driver along for the trip, rather than Zarek driving and guiding, even if extra communication is necessary during sightings (particular on night drives). We did a LOT of driving on this trip and I'm sure it was all very tiring for Zarek. On a related note, when planning road transfers, expect drives between locations to take on average 1.5x the Google Maps estimates (I've noted the few exceptions where appropriate).

IV. Other sites

Now, what other sites would one add to make the "ultimate" Kenya trip?

- Private conservancies of Laikipia are well worth a few nights, split across plains (Borana, Ol Pejeta, Sosian) and hilly bush (Laikipia Wilderness). Great for Black Rhinoceros, Grevy's Zebra, Gunther's Dik-dik, Steenbok (*neumanni*), Jackson's Hartebeest, Greater Kudu, Leopard, African Wild Dog, and Zorilla plus chances of Striped Hyena and Patas Monkey. Good rodents and bats.
- Saiwa Swamp NP for De Brazza's Monkey, Sitatunga, and possibly Spotted-necked Otter. Stuhlmann's Golden Mole may be possible in the nearby Cherangani Hills.
- Kakamega Forest, Kenya's last lowland rainforest, offers chances for a range of Congolian species difficult (or impossible) to see elsewhere. Good sightings of East African Potto and Red-tailed Monkey and chances of African Brush-tailed Porcupine, Lord Derby's Anomalure, Forest Giant Squirrel, Hammer Bat, Servaline Genet, African Palm Civet, and even Tree Pangolin. Also, if you have an academic-level interest in rodents and bats, this is really a must-visit site.
- Kisumu Impala Sanctuary, where you can catch great bats (e.g. Nyanza Serotine, Welwitsch's Myotis, Ruppell's Bat) in the company of researchers.
- Afromontane forests of Taita Hills for an undescribed Tree Hyrax taxon, Taita Dwarf Shrew, and a distinctive subspecies of Kenya Coast Dwarf Galago. Also nearby Shetani caves for bats.
- Moist forests of Kikuyu Escarpment, where (soon to be split) ssp. *keniae* of Red-legged Sun Squirrel, Jackson's Mongoose, and Kenya's only (known) African Golden Cats occur.

If you're really keen to see all of Kenya's mammals, a few more sites would be needed:

- Mt. Elgon NP for Barbour's and Mt. Elgon Vlei Rats and Kerbis Peterhans' Wood Mouse.
- The extremely remote Sibiloi NP, located on the E shore of Lake Turkana. This is the only area in Kenya where the rare and mysterious Gray Spiny Mouse, Rhoads' Gerbil, MacInnes's Mouse-tailed Bat, and Hamilton's Tomb Bat have been recorded recently. It's also a good site for Percival's Spiny Mouse and African Wolf. Some of these species may occur at more accessible Lake Baringo, where there are also records of the mysterious Phillips' Gerbil, Loring's Rat, and Large-eared Roundleaf Bat. Baringo is also great for molossids, with several little known species (*Chaerephon bivittatus*, *C. bemmeleni*, *Platymops setiger*, etc.) but finding them without mistnetting is a challenge.
- Currently dangerous Boni Forest for Aders' Duiker and 2 distinctive endemic subspecies: Mandela's Sengi and Haggard's Oribi. Gray-headed Thicket Rat may also occur here.

IV. Detailed account & Site guide

Instead of providing a day-by-day itinerary (which would be tiresome to write and read for such a long trip), I'll provide a summary of sightings for each location, what other species are possible, and my thoughts on the site itself.

Mt. Suswa

We only spent 3 midday hours at this site on 7/11, visiting en route from Nairobi to Soysambu. The first part of this drive is quite easy, via the well-maintained (and now partly paved) Ngong-Suswa Rd. We met the local guide (whom Zarek had known for years) near the junction with the track up to the caves. Although 4x4-only (and impassable in the wet), the track was in surprisingly good shape and we reached cave 18a within 3 hours from NBO.

Cave 18a is a spectacular multi-chambered lava tunnel with our target, a large colony of the stunning **Harrison's Giant Mastiff Bats** roosting deep within. Along the way, you'll pass an old Leopard den and the "baboon parliament," an area of rocks smoothed over by generations of sleeping **Olive Baboons**. On our walk out of the cave, we also saw the trip's only **Rock Hyrax** and a few **Ochre Bush Squirrels**.



Suswa: the endangered home of the incredible Harrison's Giant Mastiff Bat

In contrast to the road from Ngong, the remaining stretch of road from the cave junction to Suswa town is a dust-choked hellscape. It took us 1+ hour to do the 20km and by the end, we were all filthy from the thick cloud of fine red dust. Thanks to rampant fencing and subdivision, very little wildlife remains in this area (we just saw a few **Thomson's Gazelles**).

Soysambu Conservancy

It took another 3 hours to reach the entrance gate to Soysambu at Lake Elmenteita from Suswa town, thanks to traffic on the awful Nairobi-Nakuru highway. The conservancy is full of wildlife – the highlights from short morning and afternoon game drives were **Guerezas** (ssp. *matschiei*), a **Bat-eared Fox** pair, and beautiful (reintroduced) **Nubian Giraffes**. Other species seen during our stay included **Vervet Monkey**, **Olive Baboon**, **Black-backed Jackal**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Thomson's** and **Grant's Gazelles**, **African Buffalo**, **Common Eland**, and **Common Warthog**.

We stayed at the lovely Mbweha camp, which has good food and comfortable rooms. Importantly, they also do night drives in the nearby Congreve sector of the conservancy. As with most sites on this trip, we were met by unseasonal rain the evening of 7/11. Thankfully this let up to a drizzle, so we drove around 8-10PM seeing lots of our target – **East African Springhare** – as well as many **African Savanna Hare**, **White-tailed Mongoose**, and **Spotted Hyena**. The guide mentioned Zorillas are regularly seen, and occasionally also Aardvark. There should be a long list of nice small rodents and bats here (e.g. Forest Dormouse, Gray-bellied Mouse, and Rebori's Yellow Bat), but we didn't see any of those due to the cold, rainy weather.



Soysambu: Bent-winged Bat species (*Miniopterus* clade 7) & Nubian Giraffe

Another attraction on Soysambu is the “Diatomite cave,” really a series of 90+ abandoned mining tunnels. Some of these have been reclaimed as den sites by the local Spotted Hyenas, one of which we met emerging from another tunnel as we walked in. Understandably, we were leery about going further so briefly stopped to look at 2 undescribed species of **Bent-winged Bats** (*Miniopterus* clades 7 and 8 in Demos et al. 2020) roosting inside before leaving. I'd recommend visiting this site with someone who knows which tunnels are safe to enter (e.g. Paul Webala), as there are some good bats to be found (Eloquent/Ruppell's & Lander's Horseshoe Bats, Egyptian Slit-faced Bat, etc.). I should've allotted another night here to visit more local bat caves, such as Kariandusi mines (K), Jaika cave (J), and Menengai crater (M). Keen visitors can see *Hipposideros* cf. *tephrus* (J), *Triaenops persicus* (J), *Rhinolophus* cf. *clivus* (K), 2 more *Miniopterus* species (K+M), and Temminck's *Myotis* (M). Our plans to visit at least

one of these sites on the morning of 7/12 were aborted when the Suswa dust combined with rain jammed the windows of Zarek's Landcruiser, forcing him to spend the morning cleaning.

Mara West

Zarek found a great route to Narok (via Mau Narok) from Soysambu, so we reached Mara West camp, perched on top of the scenic Ooloolo escarpment, within 5 hours including a shopping stop. Mara West is a simple and relatively inexpensive but comfortable camp with nice grounds featuring resident **Southern Tree Hyrax**, **Acacia Rat**, and **Bush Duiker**. Great value given how expensive everything else is in the Masai Mara! The camp even has its own small area of private land where we had a reasonably productive night drive, seeing **African Savanna Hare**, **African Grass Rat** ("Masai Mara"), a possible **African Wildcat** (we couldn't confidently rule out a hybrid), **White-tailed Mongoose**, many **Spotted Hyenas**, and a **Hippopotamus**. Frustratingly, I also spotlit what must have been a Zorilla but the views were too brief to count.



Mara West: the seriously adorable Southern Tree Hyrax

We spent our evening and morning at Mara West in the nearby Nyakweri Forest, the only rainforest habitat in the Mara ecosystem. Zarek and I were keen to visit as we'd heard reliable reports of **Weyns' Duiker** here, and we had good sightings (but no photos) of 2 pairs on the morning of 7/13. I'd highly recommend visiting Nyakweri, as Weyns' Duiker is a rare species in Kenya and giving locals an incentive to protect this forest (which is sadly undergoing rapid degradation) would do a lot to help save the population here. Spotlighting in the thicket-clump savanna surrounding the forest, we had **Thick-tailed Greater Galago** (distinctive black ssp. *argentatus*) and **Woodland Thicket Rat**, as well as an unidentified (too brief views) guenon,

Vervet Monkey, Olive Baboon, African Savanna Hare, Plains Zebra, Impala, Bush Duiker, Common Eland, Cape Bushbuck, Masai Giraffe, and Common Warthog by day. Nyakweri is definitely worth more time – there is a small but visible population of Giant Pangolin here, as well as Red-tailed and Blue (*stuhlmanni*) Monkeys, Typical Zebra Mouse, and Blue Duiker.

Mara Triangle and Masai Mara NR

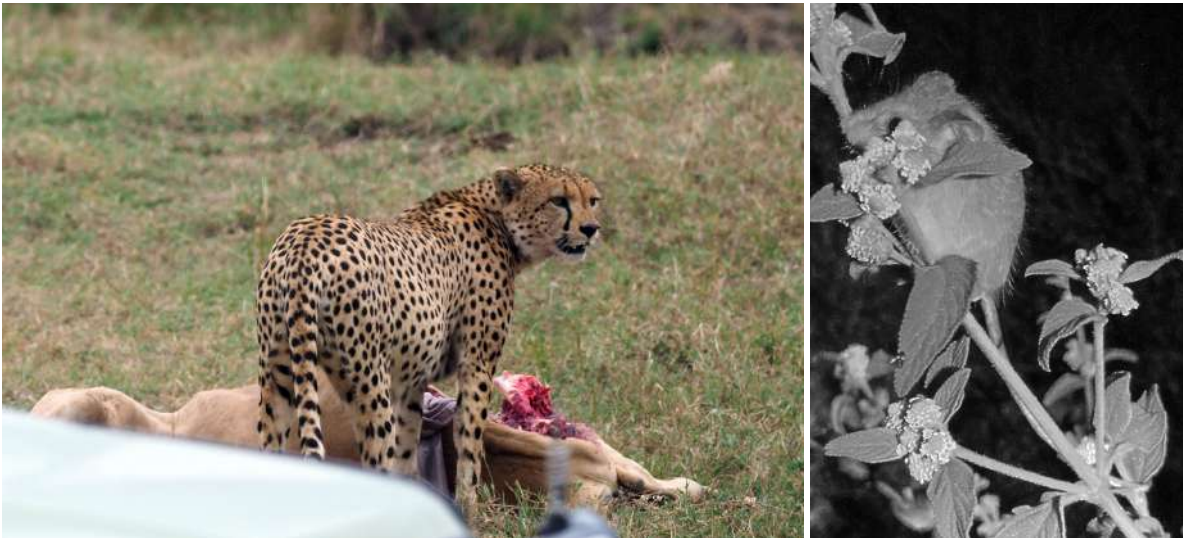
Due to our long commute across the reserve afterwards, we only spent a few hours in the Mara Triangle on the morning of 7/13, which was far too short to give it justice. It's a great area for some infrequently-seen species in Kenya: the escarpment wall is good for Mountain Reedbuck and sometimes Klipspringer, while the plains immediately below have lots of Oribi and Steenbok. According to Zarek, thickets and marshes in the riverine areas are one of the best places for sightings of Black Rhino and Serval respectively. With luck, Side-striped Jackal and Egyptian Mongoose can occasionally be seen in these habitats too. Although we weren't lucky with any of these, I had Red-tailed Monkey, Egyptian Mongoose, Oribi, and Steenbok within a single day on my last visit in 2013.



Masai Mara NR: Serval

We spent more time in the main NR, during the afternoon of 7/13 and most of 7/14. We had good sightings of **Cheetah, Serval, and Lion**, the latter of which we sadly had to leave quickly to make it to the gate on time. Common species throughout the Mara included **African Savanna Elephant, Vervet Monkey, Olive Baboon, Black-backed Jackal, Banded Mongoose, Spotted Hyena, Plains Zebra, Impala, Hartebest, Blue Wildebeest, Topi, Thomson's and Grant's Gazelles, Waterbuck (*defassa*), African Buffalo, Common Eland, Masai Giraffe, Common Warthog, and Common Hippopotamus**. Lots of **African Grass Rats (*muansae*)** were scurrying around the Sand River Gate; a derelict building there held many day-roosting **Little Free-tailed Bats** and a different lone Molossid with white-flecked dorsal fur, likely **Angolan Free-tailed Bat**.

Another unique opportunity in the NR (near Sala's Camp) is spending a morning with The Pangolin Project (<https://www.thepangolinproject.org>) research team. Zarek knows the project's founder, so arranged for the researchers to spend the morning trying to track one of the 3 GPS-tagged Ground Pangolins (sightings are NOT anywhere near guaranteed!!). Unfortunately, they couldn't locate one and we were late entering the reserve anyway (due to some confusion at Cottar's). However we were still able to see a few active burrows and watch recent camera trap footage with the field technicians, which was a great experience.



Masai Mara NR: Cheetah and Olderkesi Conservancy: Chestnut Climbing Mouse (phone pic w/ red light)

Olderkesi Conservancy

We spent 2 nights (7/13-14) at Cottar's Conservation Camp in this conservancy, located in the far SE part of the Masai Mara ecosystem bordering the Sand River to the west and pastoral land to the east. It's a strange place – although habitat diversity is high, mammal densities were much lower than in better-known conservancies such as Mara North and Naboisho. Additionally, the location is suboptimal as it took a long time (2+ hours) to get into parts of the NR with good resident game and predator activity. The Fly Camp (aka "Conservation Camp") we stayed in was similarly odd; the staff was somewhat detached and the route from Ololaimutiek was not signed, despite the fact that Olderkesi is a maze of 4x4 trails! So, all in all I'm not sure I'd recommend this area for mammal watchers even though we did have a few good sightings.

In the evenings, the camp was alive with **Southern Tree Hyrax**, **Senegal Galago**, **Acacia Rat**, and a ~41kHz Vespertilionid that Paul Webala ID'd as **Somali Serotine**. We also had a great sighting of **Chestnut Climbing Mouse** here, found by thermal scope in the tall herbaceous vegetation in front of the tents. Night drives were much slower than we had hoped. The only highlight in 5 hours of effort was **Tiny Pygmy Mouse**, but we also saw **African Savanna Hare**, **East African Gerbil**, an undescribed **Yellow Bat** (*Scotophilus* clade 4 in Demos et al. 2018), **White-tailed Mongoose**, a close-up **Large-spotted Genet**, and **Cavendish's Dik-dik**. Common species seen on the conservancy included **Vervet Monkey**, **Olive Baboon**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Thomson's Gazelle**, **African Buffalo**, **Common Eland**, **Cape Bushbuck**, **Masai Giraffe**, and **Common**

Warthog plus **Bush Hyrax** and **Common Slender Mongoose** on a kopje near the NR boundary. If you can arrange a visit, the very fancy 1920s Camp is a good place to see Bushpig at night.

I was disappointed not to see more rodents here, despite how good the habitat looked. There ought to be chances to see Forest Dormouse, Kaiser's Veld Rat, Gray-bellied Pouched Mouse, and Tiny Fat Mouse, among others. We also didn't see any "safari rarities" like Zorilla or Aardwolf, though they are around and seen from time to time.



Ol'kiramatian: Heart-nosed, East African Epauletted, and Yellow-winged Bats & Cavendish's Dik-dik

Ol'kiramatian Conservancy

It took about 10 hours to drive from Olderkesi to Lentorre Lodge, a beautiful property located in a remote part of Kenya's South Rift west of Lake Magadi. Lentorre has to be my favorite safari lodge I've stayed at – in contrast to the surrounding hot, dusty, arid land Lentorre is super comfortable, with huge rooms, great food, and open bar. Also, you can book the lodge out as a group, so we were the only guests in 90,000 acres of wilderness and had the run of the place, spending drives with both of the lodge's superb guides. The raw, larger than life "Masailand" scenery around the lodge is spectacular, featuring sunsets over the imposing Nguruman escarpment and the shimmering, golden Shompole plains.

Lentorre itself is a fabulous site for mammals large and small. Zarek had communicated our intentions to the lodge's owner ahead of our visit, so the guides had prepared all manner of bat roosts and stakeouts for small mammals. Over just 2 nights we located 6 species of bats roosting on the lodge grounds – **East African Epauletted Fruit Bat**, **Cape Roundleaf Bat (clade 2)**, **Heart-nosed Bat**, **Yellow-winged Bat**, **Egyptian Tomb Bat**, and **Little Free-tailed Bat** – as well as **Ochre Bush Squirrel** and **Nairobi Grass Rat**. The guides also found a nearby cave with **Heart-nosed** and **African Sheath-tailed Bats** and there were plenty more **East African Epauletted Fruit Bats** roosting at the Lale'enok research center down the road. Both roosting at the lodge and on night drives, we saw multiple species of larger molossids calling at lower frequencies but I was never able to get a proper photo. Some nice species have been recorded in the area, like *Chaerephon bemmeleni* and *Tadarida aegyptiaca*.

Lentorre also has one of East Africa's only wildlife photography hides, overlooking a small water hole below the lodge. In the peak of the dry season, you can frequently have close-up (6m), eye-level views of Lion, Leopard, Striped Hyena, and occasionally even Caracal and Bushpig. Since the unseasonal rain also followed us to Lentorre, we didn't spend the night in the hide but did have a **Bat-eared Fox** visit over dinner. Check out Jeffrey Wu's incredible photos ([link](#)) to see what's possible!



Ol'kiramatian: Caracal and Common Genet

The activity schedule at Lentorre is flexible. We did 2 after-dinner night drives (one short, one long), a morning safari out to the Shompole plains, and a hike near Lake Magadi looking (unsuccessfully) for Smith's Red Rock-hare. Daytime excursions are not packed with game due to nature of the land, but we did see **African Savanna Elephant**, **Vervet Monkey**, **Olive Baboon**, **Unstriped Ground Squirrel**, a glimpse of a **Caracal**, 3 **African Wildcats**, **Common Dwarf** and **Banded Mongoose**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Hartebeest**, **Gerenuk**, **Cavendish's Dik-dik**, **Grant's Gazelle**, **Lesser Kudu**, and **Masai Giraffe**. Guereza occur in the fig forest near the lodge (this area was completely overgrown thanks to good long rains in April-May), and when the grass is short, Eastern White-bearded Wildebeest and Fringe-eared Oryx are regular on the plains. We saw few mammals on our hike, though the guides have good stakeouts for Rock Hyrax and Klipspringer elsewhere. This isn't big cat country, but Lion and Leopard sightings are frequent.

Most importantly, Lentorre has East Africa's best night drives! Our long night drive out to Shompole was incredible, featuring a close-up **Caracal** sighting, an unbelievable 17+ **African Wildcats**, **East African Gerbil**, and the highlight – prolonged views of a **Striped Hyena**. On a related note, Kenya's South Rift is probably the best place in Africa for Striped Hyena; Zarek sees them most visits, and has even watched them at the waterhole over dinner at Lentorre! Aardwolf is also common (seen 50% of visits), but we dipped. Closer to camp, we had **Senegal Galago**, **Emin's Tateril**, **Yellow-winged Bat**, **White-tailed Mongoose**, and **Common** and **Large-spotted Genets** both nights and many more small, brown **Somali Serotines** flying in riverine thickets. Crested Porcupine and African Civet are also regularly seen. The far south of Shompole and dust pits near Lake Magadi should have *Gerbillus* gerbils and African Golden Wolf.



Ol'kiramatian: a superb sighting of Striped Hyena

Aberdare NP & surrounds

The drive from Lentorre to Sandai Farms near Mweiga is normally about 7 hours, but took us closer to 9 due to traffic through Nairobi and Thika. We found Sandai quirky and homey, but a bit disorganized (e.g. our room's water pump had been turned off). Our main goal here was to locate a Maned Rat, which regularly visit people's homes at Sandai and the nearby Sangare Ranch. Without a clear stakeout, we spent the first night searching tracks near the river at night with thermal imager. This wasn't a good strategy – the vegetation is very dense and road network poor, so I suspect you'd have little chance of seeing a Maned Rat even with a thermal imager. We did see **African Savanna Hare**, **East African Thicket Rat**, **Little Free-tailed Bat** (roosting in the roof at Sandai), **White-tailed Mongoose**, **Impala**, **Bush Duiker**, and **Waterbuck**

(*defassa*). A pre-dawn night walk on the lodge grounds was similarly unproductive. Of course, not a week later a Maned Rat appeared on the owner Petra's doorstep in broad daylight!



Aberdare: Maned Rat, East African Thicket Rat, and Leopard

Given the uncertainty around Maned Rats at Sandai, Zarek and I changed the second night to the Creaky Cottage, located behind the famous Trout Tree Restaurant in Naro Moru. Jon Hall had success observing **Maned Rat** here 2 nights prior, and thankfully it worked for us too! At 10PM, we were summoned out by the night guards to watch a Maned Rat make its way from the grassy patches surrounding the trout ponds to its den in the thick vegetation along the Burguret River. An unbelievably cool mammal and a trip highlight. In fact, it was so shocking that I was left fumbling with the camera, yielding crap photos... The grounds of Trout Tree are also full of **Southern Tree Hyrax** by night (and day) and habituated **Guereza Colobus** by day.

We spent the full day in between (7/18) exploring Aberdare NP. Most wildlife was in the Salient, the park's lower sector comprising montane rainforest with many marshy clearings. **Giant Forest Hogs** were the main target, and we saw an amazing 40+ over our full day, even including babies the size of guinea pigs. Other Salient highlights included a beautiful **Leopard** (which almost bumped into a herd of **African Savanna Elephants**) and a good **Suni** sighting.

Olive Baboon, Blue Monkey (*kolbi*; in the bamboo zone), distant **Guereza** (*kikuyuensis*), **Spotted Hyena, African Buffalo**, and **Cape Bushbuck** were also seen. We spent 5 hours up in the Afromontane moorland looking for uncommon antelope. Despite a lot of effort, we couldn't find a Mountain Reedbuck in the tussock grass or Black-fronted Duiker (*hooki*) in the heather & *Hagenia*, though we did see many **Bush Duiker, Waterbuck**, and 3 **Bohor Reedbuck**. I excavated a couple of African Root Rat (*audax*) tunnels in the hope of a sighting without success, though Jon Hall did see one on the same day. Bongo sightings remain rare, but are slowly increasing, while African Clawless Otter is also occasionally seen in the streams. If I come back to the park, I'd spend a night at the Fishing Lodge to look for moorland rodents (e.g. Zena Brush-furred Rat, Mesic Four-striped Grass Rat, Afroalpine Vlei Rat, Mt. Kenya Wood Mouse) and the unique Aberdare Mole-shrew. Melanistic Serval is also frequently seen up here.



Aberdare: my long-awaited lifer views of Giant Forest Hogs

Meru NP

Meru is a beautiful and little-visited national park located in the dry lowlands NE of Mt. Kenya, approximately 4 hours by road from Naro Moru via Nanyuki, Meru town, and Maua. I was a bit apprehensive about visiting, as some previous reports mentioned mammals were scarce. Luckily, my experience was exactly the opposite! Although I wouldn't visit Meru on a first safari, it's a great spot for people interested in the smaller, less conspicuous fauna.

I had 3 targets in the park – **Somali Lesser Galago, Naked Mole-rat**, and **Somali Dwarf Mongoose** – and scored them all within the first afternoon. To find the mole-rats (my most-wanted species), you simply look on roadsides for freshly excavated burrow openings indicating active animals. They look like little conical red sand volcanoes with open “calderas.” Once you find one, park nearby and wait for the mole-rat to emerge! Bwatherongi CG is the best spot for galagos. We found a galago here at a resting site on 7/19, but needed to rush back to Kinna to

beat closing time so didn't get proper views. Thankfully because Meru sees few tourists, the rangers were willing to make exceptions and took us out on a night walk at Kinna HQ and even a short drive to Bwatherongi the next evening, and we had great views of galagos. We spent both nights at the KWS Kinna Guest House, a basic but comfortable and clean self-catering accommodation in the heart of the park. Highly recommended. It's easy to see **Unstriped Ground Squirrel** by day and **Acacia Rat**, **Common Genet**, and **White-tailed Mongoose** by night here, but do watch out for cheeky **Vervet Monkeys**! Lots of bats were hawking insects around the accommodation, including possibly *Neoromicia zuluensis* and **Little Free-tailed Bat**.



Meru NP: Naked Mole-rat (video grab), Somali Dwarf Mongoose & Bright's Gazelle

We did 3 half-day drives in the park, seeing plenty of wildlife: **African Savanna Elephant**, **Bush Hyrax**, **Vervet Monkey**, **Olive Baboon** (obvious intergrades with Yellow Baboon), **Striped** and **Unstriped Ground Squirrels**, **Somali Grass Rat**, **Common Slender Mongoose**, **Common Dwarf Mongoose** (much darker brown & different in appearance from the lighter, grizzled Somali DM), **Spotted Hyena**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Hartebeest**, **Gerenuk**, **Kirk's Dik-dik**, **Bright's Gazelle**, **Beisa Oryx**, **Waterbuck**, **African Buffalo**, **Lesser Kudu**, **Reticulated Giraffe**, a single **Desert Warthog**, and **Hippopotamus**. A brief visit to the Rhino Sanctuary produced several **Southern White Rhinoceros**, but no Black Rhinos. Although fenced, the sanctuary is huge (1/3 of the park) and non-rhino mammals freely enter and exit. We left the park via Adamson's Falls, where **Heart-nosed Bats** roost in toilet blocks. This part of Meru is mostly dense *Commiphora*

with few mammals, though we did have a great sighting of an Ashe's Spitting Cobra. Other nice species regularly seen in Meru are Striped Hyena, Grevy's Zebra, and rarely Honey Badger.

Tana River Primate Reserve (TRPR)

Zarek and I were a little worried we might not finish the long drive to Tana River from Meru within a day, but the roads were much better and faster than we had feared. As a result, we made it from Meru to TRPR KWS HQ within 9 hours including stops! From Adamson's Falls, a narrow dirt track travels through Mwingi NR to some villages, growing progressively wider and better-maintained until you hit the pavement at Kyuso. From here, it is a straight shot down newly paved, open roads to Mwingi, and from there to Garissa on the major A3. The B8 (Tana River Road) is also very good now, and you can do 100+kph more or less the entire 130km from Garissa/Madogo to Hola. We saw **Unstriped Ground Squirrel**, **Yellow-winged Bat**, and **Hinde's Dik-dik** en route as well as roadkill of Aardwolf and many African Civets.



Tana River Primate Reserve: Tana River Mangabey & Tana River Red Colobus, endemic to Kenya and two of the world's rarest primates

After a prolonged check-in at the KWS HQ near Baomo, we picked up the reserve's researcher Saidi who directed us to the Primate Research Station (Mchelelo). The campsite here is nice – flat, open, cool and well shaded by the tall rainforest-like vegetation with clean cement toilet (pit) and shower (bucket) blocks. It even had a welcoming committee: a troop of 20+ **Tana River Red Colobus** and attendant **Blue Monkeys** (*albatorquatus*) circled the clearing upon our arrival. At night, it was easy to find **Northern Greater** and **Kenya Coast Dwarf Galagos**. The **Tana River Mangabey** is only findable in the mornings in July, so we spent 3 hours in the forest with Saidi and his tracker Abio locating one of the study troops on 7/22. This walk was a bit of adventure, as we had too-close encounters on foot with **African Savanna Elephants** and had to shelter in a

tree buttress from sudden torrential rain, but we enjoyed great views of the mangabeys at the end. Other mammals at TRPR were **Vervet Monkeys**, **Olive Baboon**, **Large-eared Slit-faced Bats** (roosting in a disused tent), and **Hippopotamus** in the Tana River.



Ishaqbini: undoubtedly the world's best place to see the stunning, critically endangered Hirola

Ishaqbini Hirola Community Conservancy

Going to this very remote and rarely visited site – the only place to see Hirolas in their native range – was one of the trip's real highlights. Located close to Somalia in Garissa county, security has always been a concern over the last 10+ years due to Al Shabaab, which operates with impunity in the neighboring Boni Forest region. Zarek and I were apprehensive as to whether Ishaqbini was actually safe to visit in the months prior. Thankfully, immediately before 7/22 the conservancy's director of security Mohammed, both of Zarek's local contacts, and Saidi all assured us Ishaqbini (pronounced Ishaqbin, with silent final 'i') was safe so we took the plunge.

The story of Ishaqbini is remarkable. In 2005, following the drastic decline in Hirola numbers in their native range N of the Tana River in NE Kenya, the local Somali communities of Hara, Korisa, and Kotile joined to proclaim a 72km² livestock free zone where their beloved Hirola could live without disturbance. Despite initial success, the Hirola population continued to decline due to predation so a fenced predator-free enclosure was created with the help of NRT to serve as an *in situ* breeding facility. Since then, the fenced population has expanded from 48 to a thriving 100+ while wild herds continue to hold their own in the surrounding area. A shining success for an antelope whose future looked bleak as ever just a decade ago.



Ishaqbini: beautiful, little-known Somali Lesser Galago & Reticulated Giraffe

To get to Ishaqbini from TRPR, you drive north on the B8 and cross the Tana via the bridge at Majengo. We then checked in at the KWS Ijara district HQ at Masalani before continuing south on a well-graded gravel road to Kotile, where Mohammed was waiting to escort us into the conservancy. We were given 2 keen armed rangers, Yussuf and Abdi, to accompany us on drives and a beautiful, shaded, flat campsite at Lake Ishaqbini (complete with **Blue Monkey**, **Tana River Red Colobus**, and **Northern Greater Galago** but no facilities). Both Zarek and I loved our time at Ishaqbini and felt the conservancy to be safe, with not even the slightest incident causing concern during our visit.

Over an afternoon and morning, we had great sightings of 30+ wild **Hirola**, and were even able to follow herds on foot with the rangers for closer views. Game is prolific in Ishaqbini, and we also saw many **Yellow Baboon**, **Plains Zebra** (some maneless), **Gerenuk**, **Kirk's Dik-dik**, **Waterbuck**, **Lesser Kudu**, **Reticulated Giraffe**, and **Desert Warthog** plus smaller numbers of

Common Dwarf Mongoose, **Topi** (*topi*), and **Cape Bushbuck** (*fasciatus*). A short 2-hour night drive was an unexpected bonus, yielding many curious **Somali Lesser Galagos** as well as **Cape Hare** and **Emin's Tateril** (Bat-eared Fox and African Civet are also reportedly abundant). Other mammals at Ishaqbini include frequent Tana River Mangabey and Harvey's Duiker by the lake, and Lion and African Wild Dog, both of which are seen multiple times/week by the rangers.

To leave the conservancy on 7/23, we backtracked to Masalani and eventually to the B8, which we followed south to Garsen and our final destination of Watamu. Although there is a more direct route S from Kotile (along the N bank of the Tana) to Minjila/Idsowe, Mohammed wasn't convinced of its security.



Arabuko's Endemics: Golden-rumped Sengi & Sokoke Dog Mongoose (first handheld photo?)

Watamu & Arabuko Sokoke

Watamu was one of my most eagerly anticipated destinations of the trip, a hotspot of endemism in the East African coastal forests, a new biome for me. I wasn't disappointed! Zarek's arrangements really paid off here, as he secured the best local guide of the trip (and one of the best I've ever met), David Ngala. David has spent decades conducting bird research in the forest, as well as clearing snares and fighting for its protection and probably knows Arabuko's wildlife better than anyone else. Although he's in his late 60s, he's still sharp as ever and was spotting mammals before I could even locate them in the thermal imager!

We spent 2 evenings and a morning in the Sokoke forest. Our first afternoon-night drive covered a route W from the forestry HQ through mixed forest, then S through the *Cynometra* thicket and finally E out of the Mida Gate. We were acquainted with common species like **Four-toed** and endemic **Golden-rumped Sengis**, **Blue Monkey** (*albogularis*), **Northern Greater** and **Kenya Coast Dwarf Galagos**, **Red Bush Squirrel**, **Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat**, and **Suni** plus a surprise sighting of **Harvey's Duiker**. The many bats flying over the road were mostly **Little Free-tailed** and **Least Bent-winged Bats**, based on analysis of sonograms. The next evening, we searched a different area further south where David had seen **Sokoke Dog Mongoose** in the past, and succeeded with 2 clear sightings (and record shots)! We also added a few **Bushbuck** in plantations near HQ. We spent most of our only morning in the forest walking a short trail near the campsite, where we had good views of **Golden-rumped Sengi** and **Suni**. David also smartly located a stunning **Zanj Sun Squirrel** in a large tree next to the nature center, its usual spot, completing my targets.



Common mammals of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest: Zanzibar Sun Squirrel, Suni & White-bellied Hedgehog

Other notable species in the forest include Long-tailed Pouched Rat (common in mixed forest), Southern Giant Pouched Rat, Caracal (seen once every 2 weeks by David), and Blue Duiker. Poachers are sadly hammering the forest, so Aders' Duiker is now very rare. David once pulled 150 snares over a 500m stretch of road in the *Cynometra*, the preferred habitat of Aders' Duiker! There are also some good bats in the forest, such as Decken's Horseshoe Bat, Ruppell's Bat, and African (clade 1) and Trujillo's Yellow Bats but you'd need to mistnet to have good chances of seeing them.

But there's a lot more to Watamu: Paul Webala had given me contact info for Simon Kajengo, a local guide who can take visitors to several local limestone caves. Kajengo was quite difficult to reach in the lead-up to the trip, which caused Zarek and me some anxiety, but we eventually succeeded on 7/24! Upon our request, Kajengo took us to the amazing Makuru Cave, where we saw huge numbers of **Cape Roundleaf Bats (clade 5)**, **African Sheath-tailed Bats**, tiny Least Bent-winged Bats (now called ***Miniopterus* clade 2**), and most importantly – the spectacular **African Trident Bats**. Also present were several distinctive, black-bearded **Hildegard's Tomb Bats** (in weep holes) and small numbers of a larger undescribed Bent-winged Bat, ***Miniopterus***

clade 5, formerly considered as part of the *M. inflatus* group. Kajengo also threw in a short visit to nearby Lion Cave, where we only found a few **Heart-nosed Bats**. Kaboga Cave would've also been worth a visit for Striped Leaf-nosed Bat, but we didn't have time.



Watamu: African Trident Bat & African Sheath-tailed Bat (sorry about the red light!!!)

We stayed at Turtle Bay, a comfortable and eco-friendly resort with reasonable food in Watamu. Cute **White-bellied Hedgehogs** were easy to see in grassy patches in the parking lot at night. Turtle Bay can organize boat trips with the local Marine Association in search of Indo-Pacific Humpback and Bottlenose Dolphins as well as migratory Humpback Whales, but high winds during the stay canceled our planned trip on 7/25 morning.

Tsavo East & Kulalu Ranch

During our trip, it became a running joke that I had brought the rains to Kenya, as unseasonal rains followed us everywhere we went (thanks climate change!). That streak broke in Tsavo East, which turned out to be the only place that really needed the rain! Tsavo was hot, dry, and very dusty so much so that it became rather uncomfortable when the fine red dust coated our clothes and throats on drives.

The topic of where to stay in Tsavo East was a subject of much discussion between Zarek and me during trip planning. Zarek was keen to spend our 2 nights inside the park at Satao or Ashnil, as these lodges are closer to the best game viewing. On the other hand, because Tsavo did not offer good chances to see many new species by day, I preferred a location where we could do night drives. For some reason, neither of us thought of Voi Safari Lodge (which satisfies both criteria) so Zarek and I decided to stay at Kulalu Camp, located just outside Sala Gate.

This was a bit of a mistake. I hate to say this, as Kulalu is a lovely camp, with friendly staff, great food, lots of bats, and a stunning setting on the banks of the Galana. The trouble is, it just didn't meet our mammal watching needs. Kulalu advertises productive night drives in the Galana Ranch (across the river) featuring regular sightings of Crested Porcupine, Caracal, African Wildcat, African Civet, and Aardwolf. This was a big draw for us, and Zarek communicated with the camp's booking manager multiple times (verbally and in writing) to confirm that these were still an option. Despite her repeated affirmations, when we arrived at the Galana Ranch gate on 7/25 to start our first night drive, we were bluntly refused entry. The security informed us that the ranch had changed management in April, and night drives were no longer permitted. This was a big blow to us, as it essentially nullified our entire reason for staying at Kulalu.



The majestic symbol of Tsavo East: Fringe-eared Oryx

The camp staff unsuccessfully called Galana the next day in the hopes of arranging a drive. Mistake or not on the part of the booking manager, I was not very pleased. Anyway, we tried 2-hour night drives each night on backroads near the camp. The highlight was an amazing sighting of a massive **Crested Porcupine**, which crossed the track in front of the car on 7/25. Also seen were **Senegal Galago**, **Cape Hare**, and **African Wildcat**. Small rodent numbers must have crashed due to the very dry conditions, as disappointingly, we didn't see a single one in the area. **Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat**, **Heart-nosed Bat**, **Little Free-tailed Bat**, and tiny, dark brown **Banana Bats** (flying in and out of the thatch roof on set path) roost in Kulalu camp itself.

We did one each afternoon, morning, and full day drives in Tsavo East NP. These were a bit frustrating, as the 1.5-hour stretch of road between Kulalu and Aruba was arid, desolate, and devoid of wildlife. As a result, we wasted a lot of time. That said, when did get into good parts of the park, the wildlife was genuinely excellent and Zarek knew all the best spots to visit. So we accumulated quite a nice list of sightings featuring loads of **African Savanna Elephants** (including a massive "super-tusker"), 2 prides of short-maned **Lion**, **Gerenuk**, **Peters' Gazelle**, gorgeous Fringe-eared **Beisa Oryx**, **Lesser Kudu**, and both **Desert** and **Common Warthogs**. The Kanderi swamp especially was quite spectacular, with 8 mammal species often visible at once! Other species seen in Tsavo included **Vervet Monkey**, **Yellow Baboon**, **Black-backed Jackal**, **Common Slender** and **Banded Mongooses**, **Spotted Hyena**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Hartebeest**, **Hinde's Dik-dik**, **Waterbuck**, **African Buffalo**, **Common Eland**, and **Masai Giraffe**. We were a bit disappointed to miss Honey Badger, and our bat roost searches were mostly unsuccessful here.



Tsavo East: Peters' Gazelle & Lesser Kudu

So would I advise a visit to Kulalu? For general tourists or safari-goers, sure! Mammal watchers, not so much – Voi, Satao, or Ashnil are much better options. However, if they can restart night drives on Galana, one interesting option could be the following: start with a night in the core of the park. You could then plan a full-day game drive across the park to Kulalu, do a night drive, and reduce the driving time to Watamu/Arabuko. Also, for the birders among us, I did have 2 nice sightings of Heuglin's Bustard in the dead zone between Kulalu and Ashnil (just about the only memorable life there!).



Another impressive symbol of Tsavo East: African Bush Elephant "tusker"

Rukinga Conservancy (Wildlife Works)

Rukinga is an interesting spot, located S of the Mombasa Highway and bordering Tsavo West NP near Maungu town. Formerly an ecologically ravaged, badly poached cattle station devoid of wildlife, Rukinga is now 80,000+ acres of thriving bush that is the focus of a REDD+ carbon sequestration project, numerous research studies, and a local employment scheme. There are

delightfully few restrictions and visitors are welcome to walk and night-drive as they please. In other words, Rukinga is exactly the sort of place more mammal watchers should visit!

We only had 1 night at the spacious and comfortable Ndovu House, which we all agreed was too short. The 10-person house was an absolute steal at only \$180/night, and even came complete with Tom, the talented chef who cooked up delicious meals for us.



Rukinga: Rufous Sengi

Our main goal at Rukinga was to observe **Rufous Sengis**, and Zarek arranged a local guide to help us find them. The guide's strategy – beating brush with sticks around sengi runs – worked to confirm their presence, but largely failed to give us views of the animals as they always darted off before we could get onto them. The more patient Zarek came up with a different, more effective method: once we knew a sengi was around, we quietly staked out open runs. We were eventually rewarded with great sightings on the morning of 7/28.

What we didn't know, however, is that Rukinga also has great night drives. Our single 3-hour night drive on 7/27 (despite having a frustrating ranger along who didn't understand how to use a spotlight) was remarkably productive. A melanistic **Serval** (not uncommon here) and **Wilson's Spiny Mouse** were big highlights, and we also saw **Senegal Galago**, **Cape Hare**, **2 Emin's Taterils** (still too fast for photos...), a **Black-tailed Gerbil**, **2 East African Gerbils**, **Black-backed Jackal**, **Bat-eared Fox**, **Spotted Hyena**, and **Common Genet**. Honey Badger and Aardwolf are also seen from time to time. If I came back, I'd like to try a night walk around the kopjes to look for the localized endemic Fiery Spiny Mouse and search for more bat roosts.

A brief hike up some boulders behind the ranger station yielded a good but brief sighting of **Klipspringer**, and we also saw huge herds of **African Savanna Elephants** as well as **Vervet Monkey**, **Yellow Baboon**, **Plains Zebra**, **Impala**, **Hartebeest**, **Gerenuk**, **Hinde's Dik-dik**, **African Buffalo**, **Lesser Kudu**, and **Masai Giraffe** by day.



Rukinga & Tsavo East: Wilson's Spiny Mouse (phone pic), East African Gerbil & Desert Warthog

Shimba Hills NP

A 2-hour drive brought us to this beautiful, verdant park, quite a study in contrasts from dried-up, red Rukinga. We had 3 main goals in Shimba Hills: **Angolan Colobus**, **Black-and-rufous Sengi**, and Sable. The colobus was quite easy, as we had fantastic sightings of a troop of these beautiful monkeys in the trees right outside our suite window at Shimba Hills Lodge! I spent several hours thermal scoping for the sengi in the thickets along the lodge entrance road, in the afternoon and morning. I finally scored around 7AM on 7/29 right by the ranger station at the lodge gate, the usual spot for them. A great sighting of a beautiful animal, but no usable photos as I wasn't ready with my camera in time.

The Sable proved difficult. I suspect many of the guidebooks exaggerate the ease of finding this species at Shimba, as Zarek insists the chances are never higher than 50% on a given day. The ranger at the gate told us to try Risley Ridge (#8) as Sable were seen there "yesterday," but we were unsuccessful on the afternoon of 7/28. Upon our return to the gate, he changed his story, saying the last sightings were 4 days ago. Frustrating... We tried most of the remaining accessible clearings of the park for 2 hours on 7/29 morning, but still couldn't locate them.

There are only ~60 Sable in Shimba and they move widely. Wildlife is sparse in the park, but we did see **Blue Monkey** (*albogularis*), **Yellow Baboon**, distant **Angolan Colobus**, **Impala**, **Hartebeest**, **Suni**, **Waterbuck**, **African Buffalo**, **Cape Bushbuck**, and **Common Warthog**.



Shimba Hills: a troop of somewhat relaxed Angolan Colobus visited the lodge

Zarek knows the park management, so we were allowed to leave the park at 7:30PM on 7/28, giving us time for a short night drive. We had good views of a pair of **Kenya Coast Dwarf Galagos** and a rare **Blue Duiker** sighting (in Makandara Forest), as well as a brief view of a mysterious dark mongoose. Once back at the lodge, we searched the grounds, which can be quite good for nocturnal mammals. **Little Free-tailed Bats** were flying out of the roof and 5-10 flighty largish horseshoe bats with big ears night-roosted in empty corridors. Despite a fair bit of effort, I couldn't get any photos. **Hildebrandt's/Eloquent Horseshoe Bat** (echolocating at ~35-40kHz) are the only candidates that really fit. Tom, the lodge's manager, was nice enough to let us check the garbage disposal area at night, but nothing showed up. The lodge overlooks a floodlit clearing that can be quite good for Marsh Mongoose and Bushpig, but again, we weren't successful in our short stay. **Red Bush Squirrels** of a beautiful color morph inhabit the dining room by day.

Diani & Shimoni

Diani, a popular beach resort, is located just down the hill from Shimba. We chose to end our trip here for a few reasons: 1) Zarek knew a good clinic to get a pre-departure COVID test; 2) a bit of pampering at a luxurious resort would be appreciated after a long, tiring trip; 3) Zarek is based in Diani, so he could leave his car at home; and 4) Zarek knew spots for several nice mammals near Diani we might see on site.



Shimoni: Giant Leaf-nosed Bat (roosting alongside Striped Leaf-nosed Bat)

After a COVID test in town, we did a quick midday trip to Shimoni Slave Cave (1 hour away). Zarek found a local guide nearby, allowing us to bypass the guided tours and actually spend time properly observing the bats inside. This is a great spot, though I'm not sure how much longer it will remain productive due to 1) lighting and extensive disturbance inside the cave; and 2) an awful streetlight just outside the cave which disrupts bats' exit flight path. According to Paul Webala, diversity and abundance have discernibly declined here in recent years. Regardless, we had great views of lots of impressive **Giant Leaf-nosed Bats** (~55kHz) and a small number of the warmer brown, shorter-haired **Striped Leaf-nosed Bats**, which registered at higher frequencies (65-70kHz). Shimoni is the only cave where two *Macronycteris* roost side by side. We also enjoyed seeing 2 **Lander's Horseshoe Bats** and many **African Sheath-tailed** and **Hildegarde's Tomb Bats**. If we had a full day, we'd have visited nearby 3 Sisters Caves (many bats with rare Percival's Trident Bat and Eloquent/Ruppell's Horseshoe Bat, which I'd have liked to see at roost) and Kisite-Mpunguti Reserve (Indo-Pacific Humpback and Bottlenose Dolphins).



Shimoni: Lander's Horseshoe Bat & Hildegard's Tomb Bat

Back in Diani, the Sands at Nomad resort is a great place to stay not just for the delicious food and beautiful rooms and beach, but also productive night walks! A walk with a friend of Zarek's on the nature trail produced 3 **Four-toed Sengis**, a **Northern Greater Galago**, plenty of **Kenya Coast Dwarf Galagos** (still too fast for my camera), and dozens of **Suni**. We still hadn't found our key targets, so Zarek and I walked the paths around the rooms after the employees went home. Within half an hour of thermal scoping, I located a huge **Southern Giant Pouched Rat**. But the highlight of the night came a few minutes later, when I spotted a **Bushy-tailed Mongoose** that gave superb but brief views as it scurried across a path. Although Sokoke Dog Mongoose is mapped for Diani, all recent records of *Bdeogale* (roadkills, sightings, and camera trap images) in the area indicate the dark blackish, more bushy-tailed *B. crassicauda*.

Diani can be good for sightings of Black-and-rufous Sengi and Angolan Colobus by day, but we didn't try having succeeded in Shimba. We did see plenty of **Vervet** and **Blue Monkeys** though.

Nairobi NP

A late morning flight (by efficient, on-time JamboJet) brought us back to JKIA by midday on 7/30. After a late lunch and visit to a copy center in Langata, we entered Nairobi NP with 1 mission: Mountain Reedbuck. These elusive, medium-size antelope of rocky grassland have exquisite camouflage, and as a result eluded us thus far. Although the population here is small (~30), Zarek thinks Nairobi NP is the most reliable place to see this species in Kenya, as they are usually present in a couple of rocky areas in the park. Our new driver David efficiently drove us to the spot, stopping only briefly for a few **Southern White Rhinoceros** en route. Zarek then quickly picked out 2 groups of **Mountain Reedbuck** (*chanleri*) totaling 6 animals with his binoculars. Of course, it felt great to end the trip on a high note, with good views of my last target species (the 123rd mammal of the trip, for those counting).

Nairobi NP is remarkably rich in mammals and well worth a visit if you have some spare time in the city. According to Zarek, it's quite reliable for Black Rhinoceros and Suni. In our short stay,

we also saw **Vervet Monkey, Olive Baboon, Black-backed Jackal, Plains Zebra, Impala, Hartebeest, Thomson's and Grant's Gazelle, Bohor Reedbuck, African Buffalo, Masai Giraffe, and Common Warthog.** It's really quite impressive to have such a substantial park on the doorstep of a sprawling capital city.



Nairobi NP: Mountain Reedbuck & Bohor Reedbuck

V. Acknowledgements

First off, a huge thanks to Zarek! Without your knowledge, planning, logistical skills, sharp eyes, and hours upon hours of driving, this trip would've been nowhere nearly as successful! Thanks are also due to Dr. Paul Webala for providing loads of reliable advice on Kenyan bats and the best places to find many of my target species, as well as information on their distribution and taxonomy. Also, thank you to Jon Hall for gripping me off with your Maned Rat sighting and ultimately leading me to my own, and to Alex Meyer for your detailed advice based on your own 2021 trip. As always, thanks are due to all the excellent local guides I met over my travels in Kenya. Local knowledge goes a long way, and there's no doubt that a lot of it aided my search for many rare and elusive mammals. Finally, I should thank Stratton Hatfield for sharing his expertise on the Mara and helping Zarek and me plan our visit to Mara West and Nyakweri.

VI. What we missed

I can't complain given all our success, but a few species did elude us. Black-fronted Duiker and Sable were essentially the only two target species I expected to see but couldn't find, likely due to insufficient effort and a bit of bad luck. We were never lucky to spot an Aardvark, a (confirmed) Zorilla, Honey Badger, or Aardwolf despite many night drives in appropriate habitat, nor did we see widespread rodent genera such as Dormice (*Graphiurus*), Zebra Mice (*Lemniscomys*), Least Gerbil (*Gerbillus pusillus*), Rock Rats (*Aethomys*), or Tiny Fat Mouse (*Steatomys parvus*). The paucity of recent published records makes small species quite difficult to target. The full moon in Arabuko limited our chances to see Long-tailed Pouched Rat, while high winds there also prevented us from spending time on the ocean for Indo-Pacific Humpback and Bottlenose Dolphins. I was surprised that we never saw East African Mole-rat or Mauritian Tomb Bat despite visiting many sites where both species occur; I suppose we didn't do enough targeted searching. Also, I confidently identified very few Vespertilionids despite seeing plenty; the absence of call libraries and distinguishing external features (with few exceptions) makes these near-impossible to ID without mistnetting. Finally (and unsurprisingly) we never saw

several genuinely rare species such as Smith's Red Rock-hare, Aberdare Mole-shrew, Percival's Trident Bat, Ground Pangolin, Aders' Duiker, or Bongo, all of which were really long shots at best.



Hirola & Topi (Ishaqbini): They just HAD to pose from behind that stick?! Sometimes, life isn't fair... :P

VII. Mammal species list (126 TOTAL)

Location codes: SUS = Suswa, SOY = Soysambu, MAW = Mara West, MNR = Mara Triangle & Masai Mara NR, OLD = Olderkesi, LEN = Lentorre, ABE = Aberdare, MER = Meru NP, TRP = Tana River Primate Reserve, IHC = Ishaqbini Hirola Conservancy, WAT = Watamu, TSE = Tsavo East, RUK = Rukinga, SHI = Shimba Hills, DIA = Diani, NNP = Nairobi NP (X = photo, R = recording)

	Species	Common Name	Photo	Sites observed	Notes
1.	<i>Elephantulus rufescens</i>	Rufous Sengi	X	RUK	
2.	<i>Petrodromus tetradactylus</i>	Four-toed Sengi	X	WAT, DIA	
3.	<i>Rhynchocyon chrysopygus</i>	Golden-rumped Sengi	X	WAT	
4.	<i>Rhynchocyon petersi</i>	Black-and-rufous Sengi		SHI	ssp. <i>petersi</i>
5.	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>	African Savanna Elephant	X	MNR, LEN, ABE, MER, TRP, TSE, RUK	
6.	<i>Dendrohyrax arboreus</i>	Southern Tree Hyrax	X	MAW, OLD, ABE	
7.	<i>Heterohyrax brucei</i>	Bush Hyrax	X	MNR, MER	
8.	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	Rock Hyrax	X	SUS	ssp. <i>johnstoni</i>
9.	<i>Cercopithecus mitis</i>	Blue Monkey	X	ABE, TRP, IHC, WAT, SHI, DIA	ssp. <i>kolbi</i> , <i>albоторquatus</i> , <i>albugularis</i>
10.	<i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>	Vervet Monkey	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, LEN, MER, TRP, TSE, RUK, DIA, NNP	ssp. <i>hilgerti</i>
11.	<i>Cercocebus galeritus</i>	Tana River Mangabey	X	TRP	
12.	<i>Papio anubis</i>	Olive Baboon	X	SUS, SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, LEN, ABE, MER*, NNP	
13.	<i>Papio cynocephalus</i>	Yellow Baboon	X	TRP, IHC, WAT, TSE, RUK, SHI, DIA	ssp. <i>ibeanus</i>
14.	<i>Colobus angolensis</i>	Angolan Colobus	X	SHI	ssp. <i>palliatus</i>
15.	<i>Colobus guereza</i>	Guereza	X	SOY, ABE	ssp. <i>matschiei</i> , <i>kikuyuensis</i>
16.	<i>Piliocolobus rufomitratu</i>	Tana River Red Colobus	X	TRP, IHC	
17.	<i>Galago gallarum</i>	Somali Lesser Galago	X	MER, IHC	
18.	<i>Galago senegalensis</i>	Senegal Galago	X	OLD, LEN, TSE, RUK	ssp. <i>sotikae</i> , <i>braccatus</i>

19.	<i>Otolemur crassicaudatus</i>	Thick-tailed Greater Galago		MAW	<i>ssp. argentatus</i>
20.	<i>Otolemur garnettii</i>	Northern Greater Galago	X	TRP, IHC, WAT, DIA	<i>ssp. lasiotis</i>
21.	<i>Paragalago cocos</i>	Kenya Coast Dwarf Galago		TRP, WAT, SHI, DIA	
22.	<i>Lepus capensis</i>	Cape Hare	X	LEN, IHC, TSE, RUK	
23.	<i>Lepus victoriae</i>	African Savanna Hare	X	SOY, MAW, OLD, ABE	
24.	<i>Heterocephalus glaber</i>	Naked Mole-rat	X	MER	
25.	<i>Hystrix cf. cristata</i>	Crested Porcupine		TSE	Potential split <i>H. galeata</i>
26.	<i>Heliosciurus undulatus</i>	Zanj Sun Squirrel	X	WAT	
27.	<i>Paraxerus ochraceus</i>	Ochre Bush Squirrel	X	SUS, LEN	
28.	<i>Paraxerus palliatus</i>	Red Bush Squirrel	X	WAT, SHI	
29.	<i>Euxerus erythropus</i>	Striped Ground Squirrel		MER	
30.	<i>Xerus rutilus</i>	Unstriped Ground Squirrel	X	LEN, MER, TRP	
31.	<i>Pedetes surdaster</i>	East African Springhare	X	SOY	
32.	<i>Acomys wilsoni</i>	Wilson's Spiny Mouse	X	RUK	
33.	<i>Taterillus emini</i>	Emin's Tateril		LEN, IHC, RUK	
34.	<i>Gerbilliscus nigricaudus</i>	Black-tailed Gerbil		RUK (clade 1)	
35.	<i>Gerbilliscus vicinus</i>	East African Gerbil	X	OLD (clade 2), LEN, RUK (clade 1)	
36.	<i>Lophiomyys imhausi</i>	Maned Rat	X	ABE	
37.	<i>Arvicanthis nairobae</i>	Nairobi Grass Rat	X	LEN	
38.	<i>Arvicanthis (neumanni) somalicus</i>	Somali Grass Rat		MER	
39.	<i>Arvicanthis (niloticus) muansae</i>	Masai Mara Grass Rat	X	MAW, MNR	
40.	<i>Grammomys cf. dolichurus</i>	Woodland Thicket Rat	X	MAW	Species complex (<i>G. surdaster</i> ?)
41.	<i>Grammomys cf. ibeanus</i>	East African Thicket Rat	X	ABE	Species complex
42.	<i>Thallomys cf. paedulus</i>	Acacia Rat	X	MAW, OLD, MER	

43.	<i>Mus cf. minutoides</i>	Tiny Pygmy Mouse		OLD	Species complex
44.	<i>Cricetomys ansorgei</i>	Southern Giant Pouched Rat		DIA	
45.	<i>Dendromus cf. mystacalis</i>	Chestnut Climbing Mouse	X	OLD	Species complex
46.	<i>Atelerix albiventris</i>	White-bellied Hedgehog	X	WAT	
47.	<i>Epomophorus minimus</i>	East African Epauletted Fruit Bat	X	LEN	<i>E. minor</i> is a synonym
48.	<i>Epomophorus wahlbergi</i>	Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat	X	WAT, TSE	
49.	<i>Hipposideros caffer</i> clade 2	Cape Roundleaf Bat		LEN	Undescribed sp. <i>caffer</i> group
50.	<i>Hipposideros "caffer"</i> clade 5	Cape/Noack's Roundleaf Bat	X	WAT	Undescribed sp. <i>caffer/ruber</i> group
51.	<i>Macronycteris gigas</i>	Giant Leaf-nosed Bat	X	DIA	
52.	<i>Macronycteris vittatus</i>	Striped Leaf-nosed Bat	X	DIA	
53.	<i>Cardioderma cor</i>	Heart-nosed Bat	X	LEN, MER, WAT, TSE	
54.	<i>Lavia frons</i>	Yellow-winged Bat	X	LEN, TRP	
55.	<i>Rhinolophus eloquens/hildebrandtii</i>	Eloquent/Hildebrandt's Horseshoe Bat	R	SHI	Not identified to species
56.	<i>Rhinolophus cf. landeri</i>	Lander's Horseshoe Bat	X	DIA	Species complex
57.	<i>Triaenops afer</i>	African Trident Bat	X	WAT	
58.	<i>Coleura afra</i>	African Sheath-tailed Bat	X	LEN, WAT, DIA	
59.	<i>Taphozous hildegardeae</i>	Hildegard's Tomb Bat	X	WAT, DIA	
60.	<i>Taphozous perforatus</i>	Egyptian Tomb Bat	X	LEN	ssp. <i>haedinus</i>
61.	<i>Nycteris macrotis</i>	Large-eared Slit-faced Bat	X	TRP	Probable
62.	<i>Miniopterus</i> clade 2	"Least" Bent-	R	WAT (large, dense	Tiny <i>Miniopterus</i> ,

	(formerly <i>M. cf. minor</i>)	winged Bat		clusters of dozens)	dark blackish dorsally and light gray ventrally; 58-98+kHz (~63kHz)
63.	<i>Miniopterus</i> clade 5 (formerly <i>M. cf. inflatus</i>)	“Greater” Bent-winged Bat	X	WAT (small group ~5 mixed with other bats)	Large (similar size to <i>Triadenops</i>), similar color to clade 2
64.	<i>Miniopterus</i> clade 7 (formerly <i>M. cf. natalensis arenarius</i>)	“Natal” Bent-winged Bat	X	SOY (clusters of dozens on ceiling of cave)	Medium-sized, dark brownish black dorsal & ventral, shorter fur
65.	<i>Miniopterus</i> clade 8 (formerly <i>M. cf. africanus</i>)	“African” Bent-winged Bat	X	SOY (singles/small groups on walls of cave)	Large, steel gray dorsally, pale ventrally, longer shaggy fur
66.	<i>Chaerephon pumilus</i>	Little Free-tailed Bat	X	MNR, LEN, ABE, TSE, SHI	
67.	<i>Mops cf. condylurus</i>	Angolan Free-tailed Bat	X	MNR	Probable; whitish ventral pelage & flank stripe, pale wings & white flecks dorsally
68.	<i>Otomops harrisoni</i>	Harrison’s Giant Mastiff Bat	X	SUS	
69.	<i>Scotophilus</i> clade 4	African Yellow Bat (clade 4)	R	OLD, LEN	Yellow fur; <i>S. dinganii</i> complex
70.	<i>Afronycteris nana</i>	Banana Serotine	R	TSE	Calls 90-65kHz; fluttering flight
71.	<i>Neoromicia somalicus</i>	Somali Serotine	R	OLD, LEN	Calls 70-35kHz
72.	<i>Lupulella mesomelas</i>	Black-backed Jackal	X	SOY, MNR, TSE, RUK, NNP	ssp. <i>schmidtii</i>
73.	<i>Otocyon megalotis</i>	Bat-eared Fox	X	SOY, LEN, RUK	ssp. <i>virgatus</i>
74.	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	Cheetah	X	MNR	ssp. <i>jubatus</i>
75.	<i>Caracal caracal</i>	Caracal	X	LEN	ssp. <i>caracal</i>
76.	<i>Felis lybica</i>	African Wildcat	X	MAW?, LEN, TSE	ssp. <i>lybica</i>
77.	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>	Serval	X	MNR, RUK (melanistic)	
78.	<i>Panthera leo</i>	Lion	X	MNR, TSE	ssp. <i>melanochaita</i>
79.	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Leopard	X	ABE	ssp. <i>pardus</i>
80.	<i>Bdeogale crassicauda</i>	Bushy-tailed Mongoose		DIA	

81.	<i>Bdeogale omnivora</i>	Sokoke Dog Mongoose	X	WAT	
82.	<i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>	Common Slender Mongoose	X	MNR, MER, IHC, TSE	Rufous, olive, and brown morphs
83.	<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>	White-tailed Mongoose	X	SOY, MAW, OLD, LEN	
84.	<i>Helogale hirtula</i>	Somali Dwarf Mongoose	X	MER	
85.	<i>Helogale parvula</i>	Common Dwarf Mongoose		LEN, MER, IHC	Rufous and dark brown morphs
86.	<i>Mungos mungo</i>	Banded Mongoose	X	MNR, LEN, TSE	
87.	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	Spotted Hyena	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, ABE, MER, TSE, RUK	
88.	<i>Hyaena hyaena</i>	Striped Hyena	X	LEN	
89.	<i>Genetta genetta</i>	Common Genet	X	LEN, MER, RUK	
90.	<i>Genetta maculata</i>	Large-spotted Genet		OLD, LEN	
91.	<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>	Southern White Rhinoceros	X	MER, NNP	Introduced
92.	<i>Equus quagga</i>	Plains Zebra	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, LEN, MER, IHC, TSE, RUK, NNP	ssp. <i>boehmi</i>
93.	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	Impala	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, LEN, ABE, MER, TSE, RUK, SHI, NNP	
94.	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>	Hartebeest	X	MNR, LEN, MER, TSE, RUK, SHI, NNP	ssp. <i>cokii</i>
95.	<i>Beatragus hunteri</i>	Hirola	X	IHC	
96.	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>	Common Wildebeest	X	MNR	ssp. <i>mearnsi</i>
97.	<i>Damaliscus lunatus</i>	Topi	X	MNR, IHC	ssp. <i>jimela</i> , <i>topi</i>
98.	<i>Eudorcas thomsonii</i>	Thomson's Gazelle	X	SUS, SOY, MNR, OLD, NNP	ssp. <i>thomsonii</i> , <i>nasalis</i>
99.	<i>Litocranius walleri</i>	Gerenuk	X	LEN, MER, IHC, TSE, RUK	ssp. <i>walleri</i>
100.	<i>Madoqua cavendishi</i>	Cavendish's Dik-dik	X	OLD, LEN	
101.	<i>Madoqua hindei</i>	Hinde's Dik-dik	X	TRP, TSE, RUK	
102.	<i>Madoqua kirkii</i>	Kirk's Dik-dik	X	MER, IHC	
103.	<i>Nanger granti</i>	Grant's Gazelle	X	SOY, MNR, LEN, NNP	
104.	<i>Nanger notatus</i>	Bright's Gazelle	X	MER	

105.	<i>Nanger petersi</i>	Tana Gazelle	X	TSE	
106.	<i>Cephalophus harveyi</i>	Harvey's Duiker		WAT	
107.	<i>Cephalophus weynsi</i>	Weyns' Duiker		MAW	ssp. <i>johnstoni</i>
108.	<i>Philantomba monticola</i>	Blue Duiker		SHI	ssp. <i>sundevalli</i>
109.	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Bush Duiker	X	MAW, ABE	ssp. <i>hindei</i> , <i>nyansae</i> , <i>altivallis</i>
110.	<i>Oryx beisa</i>	Beisa Oryx	X	MER, TSE	ssp. <i>beisa</i> , <i>callotis</i>
111.	<i>Nesotragus moschatus</i>	Suni	X	ABE, WAT, SHI, DIA	ssp. <i>kirchenpaueri</i> , <i>moschatus</i>
112.	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>	Klipspringer	X	RUK	ssp. <i>schillingsi</i>
113.	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	Waterbuck	X	MNR, ABE, MER, IHC, TSE, SHI	ssp. <i>defassa</i> , <i>ellipsiprymnus</i>
114.	<i>Redunca fulvorufula</i>	Mountain Reedbuck	X	NNP	ssp. <i>chanleri</i>
115.	<i>Redunca redunca</i>	Bohor Reedbuck	X	ABE, NNP	ssp. <i>wardi</i>
116.	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>	African Buffalo	X	SOY, MNR, OLD, ABE, MER, TSE, RUK, SHI, NNP	ssp. <i>caffer</i>
117.	<i>Tragelaphus imberbis</i>	Lesser Kudu	X	LEN, MER, IHC, TSE, RUK	ssp. <i>australis</i>
118.	<i>Tragelaphus oryx</i>	Common Eland	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, MER, TSE	ssp. <i>pattersonianus</i>
119.	<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>	Cape Bushbuck	X	MAW, OLD, ABE, IHC, WAT, SHI	ssp. <i>delamerei</i> , <i>fasciatus</i>
120.	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	Nubian Giraffe	X	SOY	ssp. <i>rothschildi</i>
121.	<i>Giraffa reticulata</i>	Reticulated Giraffe	X	MER, IHC	
122.	<i>Giraffa tippelkirschi</i>	Masai Giraffe	X	MAW, MNR, OLD, LEN, TSE, RUK, NNP	
123.	<i>Hylochoerus meinertzhageni</i>	Giant Forest Hog	X	ABE	ssp. <i>meinertzhageni</i>
124.	<i>Phacochoerus aethiopicus</i>	Desert Warthog	X	MER, IHC, TSE	ssp. <i>delamerei</i>
125.	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Common Warthog	X	SOY, MAW, MNR, OLD, TSE, SHI, NNP	ssp. <i>massaicus</i>
126.	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	Hippopotamus	X	MAW, MNR, MER, TRP	

IX. Selected photographs (all © Venkat Sankar 2021)



Masai Mara NR: Little Free-tailed Bat, Thomson's Gazelle, Bush Hyrax, Masai Mara Grass Rat & Eland



Lentorre: Nairobi Grass Rat, White-tailed Mongoose, Olive Baboon & Egyptian Tomb Bat



Aberdare: Guereza, Southern Tree Hyrax, African Bush Elephant, Maned Rat & Giant Forest Hog (uncropped!)



Meru NP: Kirk's Dik-dik, Olive Baboon (displaying some phenotypic traits of Yellow Baboon) & cute Beisa Oryx calves against classic Meru scenery



Tana River PR & Ishaqbini: Tana River Mangabey, Blue Monkey, Hirola, Lesser Kudu & Gerenuk



Watamu & Arabuko Sokoke Forest: African Wood Owl, African Trident Bat + “Greater” Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus* clade 5), Golden-rumped Sengi & Cape Roundleaf Bat (clade 5)



Tsavo: Fringe-eared Oryx, Klipspringer, Heuglin's Bustard, Lion (note the short, reduced manes characteristic of Lions of hot, low country), African Wildcat