

The Anne K. Taylor Fund

2021 Annual Report

A Note from Anne

Dear fellow travelers and generous supporters,

While the world still struggles with the pandemic that has dominated our lives for two years, I have found travel to be a tonic. It all seems overwhelming until one arrives at the destination and finds life continuing much as normal – but with added COVID restrictions to keep everyone safe. In Kenya where I've been for the last few months, for example, I feel perfectly comfortable with the levels of vaccinations, mask wearing, and social distancing and am so glad I did not let the current situation prevent me from being in the world.

I recently spent several weeks in the Mara with my Anne K. Taylor Fund (AKTF) team visiting all our projects: anti-poaching patrols, fortifying bomas, partnering with schools, and empowering women's health and financial independence. The Anti-Poaching Team is currently working day and night to protect the Mara's lions, which are under threat from young Maasai warriors – 3,000 strong. The warriors are intent on killing lions with spears to prove their bravery for Eunoto, a coming-of-age ceremony that happens once every ten years. The lions (illegally) targeted by this tradition are under serious threat as a species in Kenya and around the world, so they need our help. I am so proud of Elias and the rest of my team, as well as our conservation partners, who have literally dedicated the last several months to protecting the lions without ever leaving, even to see their families, despite the pressure they receive from the young warriors. We will continue to stay with the lions until the threat is passed and pray that we will be successful in preventing a situation in which both the boys and lions are in danger. I must take this opportunity to thank all AKTF's generous donors whose support allows us protect these lions and other wildlife with our regular patrols. And to thank all those who travel with us and choose to meet my team and visit our projects. It is always a highlight for everyone involved. Thank you.

Speaking of visits, I spent an incredible couple of days on Ol Pejeta Conservancy, in Northern Kenya, to check out a new destination for our guests. It was an unbelievable trip. I was generously hosted by Asilia in their lovely tented camp on the River. My guide, Duma, was totally brilliant – passionate and knowledgeable, and magically all the animals appeared for us! He knew where to go to get the best game viewing experience – a beautiful cheetah on a kill, elephants galore coming right up to the vehicle as if to greet us, rhinos by the dozen, and huge herds of zebra and buffalo, with no other vehicles in sight! In addition, I had a morning with the tracker dogs and their handlers visiting the last remaining Northern White Rhinos. We hope that the proposed breeding programme using IVF and surrogate Southern White rhinos might bring this species back from the brink of extinction. There are only two females left in the entire world – and they are on our watch!

A Note from Anne

Additionally on the travel front, AKTF was proud to again be one of the Conservation Partners of the Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year competition (<https://thegreatestmaasaimara.com/>), and we are grateful for the support. As a result, I got to know many of the photographers who supported AKTF throughout the year, and we discussed some potential tour partnerships. For those who are interested in photography, what better opportunity could there be than to travel with a local professional photographer teaching you the tricks of their trade and showing you the hidden facets of their own countries? This opportunity is already available in Zambia and Kenya, so please do let us know if you are interested!

It is wonderful to know that the world is opening up, albeit with a few hiccups, which will hopefully soon be relegated to a back page! People have adapted to the new normal and we can hardly wait to plan some amazing adventures for you, your family, and your friends. During the winter, leaving for a warm destination (such as Kenya!) is a great option as life here is lived in the sunshine – making it and other equatorial, outdoor destinations a perfect choice to jumpstart your travel dreaming! Egypt, which is now open with some amazing new options, also comes to mind. It is one of my personal favourites, steeped in history and legendary hospitality. The Nile River Cruise sails between the heavenly cities of Luxor and Aswan or vice versa where one can explore the divine Karnak temples complex, the legendary Valley of the Kings, the mesmerizing Hatsheput, Kom Ombo, Philae, and Edfu temples, and so much more – all illuminated by your own charming and knowledgeable Egyptologist. Well worth a visit, I must say! Please do contact us to help dust off the confinement cobwebs and plan some travel for you! info@aktaylor.com; anne@aktaylor.com; farley@aktaylor.com

On that note, I wish you all a very happy Holiday Season. May 2022 bring better days for one and all. Thank you, once more, for all the support you have given us in the travel and conservation worlds.

With warmest regards,

Anne

AKTF Leadership

Clockwise from top left:

- **Anne Kent Taylor**, Director & National Geographic Explorer
- **Elias Kamande**, Patrol Team Leader
- **Caroline Kiugo**, Community Programs Leader
- **Felix Masaku**, Boma Team Leader



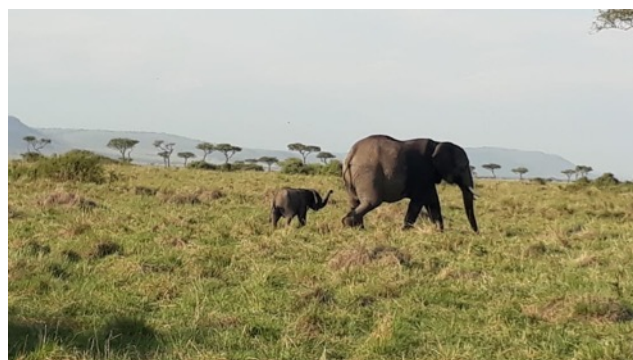
Anti-Poaching

We facilitate patrols with local authorities, such as the Mara Conservancy, to disrupt poaching activity, rescue animals wounded by poachers, and arrest poachers. We also search for and retrieve the highly camouflaged and deadly wire snares that poachers use to trap and kill animals. Sadly, poaching activity increased this year. As just one example of this, we made a record-breaking rescue of three baby elephants from snares in a single day, in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service vets, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, and Mara Elephant Project.

Successes in 2021:

- **16 animals rescued**, including 6 elephants and many zebra from snare and spear wounds, plus 1 lion injured in a fight
 - Sadly, 59 animals were found already dead
- **269 snares** retrieved (totaling 7,557 since 2009)
- **90 poaching weapons** retrieved (including spears, swords, pangas, & axes)
- **23 poachers** (including Moran warriors) arrested, on patrols with Mara Conservancy
- **5 poacher camps** found and dismantled





ANTI-POACHING PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

Rescuing Elephants

Together with our partners at the Mara Conservancy, Mara North Conservancy, Mara Elephant Project, Elephant Neighbors Centre, and Kenya Wildlife Service, we were able to patrol and rescue many elephants this year.

Several had been cut deeply and infected by poachers' deadly wire snares, and some had been speared directly.

By working together with Marc Goss and his team at Mara Elephant Project, we were able to find, free, and treat three baby elephants and successfully release them back to their families – all in a single day.

Protecting Habitats

In order to conserve the dwindling forests surrounding Maasai Mara, our team patrols with the Kenya Forestry Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, and Mara Conservancy, to locate and destroy illegal charcoal and logging operations. Additionally, we patrol the savannahs for livestock herds encroaching on the protected habitats, protected for wild animals. Sadly, this year many electric fences have been installed around the Mara, and we find ourselves also now patrolling for animals injured – or even killed – by them. There is little we or the veterinarians can do to treat electric shocks, and the poor animals die, like the pregnant zebra here and a giraffe not pictured.

In 2021:

- **463 illegal charcoal kilns** found & destroyed
- **7 animals found electrocuted** by fences – including 2 giraffe, and the pregnant zebra pictured here
- **Hundreds of trees planted** near local schools, in partnership with Elephant Neighbors Centre





HABITAT PROTECTION PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:

Planting Trees

In partnership with the Mara Conservancy and Elephant Neighbors Centre, AKTF facilitated tree-planting projects near local schools. The trees give will provide much-needed shade, wind protection, and soil stabilization to the school grounds.

The trees will also contribute to restoring the hydrology of the local environment, meaning they will help keep the rain cycles and ground water in balance. This, of course, is in the best interests of the people and the animals.





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BEHIND THE SCENES IN MAASAI MARA:

Preserving Beauty

Each year, the Angama Foundation graciously includes AKTF as a beneficiary in “The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year” fundraising competition it sponsors. And each year, dozens of world class photographers submit stunning images in support of AKTF.

Here are just a few of those brilliant shots that capture something of the natural wonder we strive to preserve in Maasai Mara.

Fortifying Bomas

Bomas protect Maasai livestock from predators, like lions. This in turn protects predators from retaliation by herders that have lost livestock.

Our bomas are built (or refurbished) using metal corners and chain-link fencing. These materials will survive the harsh climate of the Mara and last for many years. That is, unless elephants break them down out of frustration over the electric fences now spanning the Mara! When this happens, our team shows up to repair the damage.

These bomas are made possible through partnerships with National Geographic, Angama Foundation, Eden Wildlife Trust, Adventure Travel Conservation Fund, and Maasai landowners, as well as other donors.

2021 Achievements:

- **10 bomas constructed** (totalling 861 bomas fortified since 2008)
- **35 bomas refurbished** or repaired
- **9,900 head of livestock** protected



Supporting Schools

2021 Successes:

- COVID-19 masks provided to students and teachers at Oloolmongi, Nailepu, Oliashire, and other local schools
- School lunch program at Oloolmongi Primary School continues to provide daily nourishment for 506 students
- Completed installation of 50,000m³ water storage and filtration at Oloolmongi, providing enough clean water for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and hand washing for the student body.
- More water tanks, filtration, and 2 new classrooms and a teachers' office built at Nailepu Junior Academy thanks entirely to Susan and Larry Patrick
- Providing classroom supplies and sports equipment to Oloolmongi, Oliashire, and Nailepu Schools



Community Health

Because menstruation is a taboo subject in Maasai Mara, young women are not taught how to safely manage their periods each month. As a result, female students end up missing a lot of school out of shame or fear of bleeding in class, and they fall behind their male peers.

To address this, the Esidai Women's Group, sponsored by AKTF, have been sewing washable, sanitary pads for girls and women to use to discreetly manage their bleeding. These allow girls to attend school all month long and keep up with the rest of their class, and for women to manage their periods in a healthier way.

2021 Successes:

- **300 menstrual health kits** (4 washable pads, waterproof bag, and package) **and workshops** were distributed to young women at schools.
- **200 menstrual health kits and a training workshop** were delivered to 11 teachers at Olderkesi and 6 staff of the CWC Trust (pictured here), in partnership with Cottars 1920 Camp.



Community Health (cont.)



In addition to menstrual hygiene kits, the Esidai group uses their sewing skills to make masks for students, teachers, and even hospital staff (*top left*) in the Mara, keeping their community that much safer from COVID-19! They have recently also begun making school uniforms (*bottom right*) for an entire school and hope to continue contracting with other schools for more orders.



More 2021 Successes:

- **2,400 COVID-19 reusable masks** sewn for students, teachers, and hospital staff
- **200 liters per month of soap** produced using locally available materials, which the women of Esidai sell to local lodges, schools, hospitals, and community members
- **Hundreds of sanitary pads** produced to order for local schools in the Mara, thanks to the vision and support of Janyne Preston
- **Hundreds of school uniforms** produced for students.



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH ESIDAI

Empowering Women



The Esidai Women's Group successful sewing (pads, masks, and uniforms) and soap-making initiatives have enabled these women to break through cultural barriers and to inspire a new generation of girls. Economically empowered women have better chances of negotiating and safeguarding their choices regarding the basic household and health needs of their families, especially during this time when women are bearing the economic brunt of the pandemic.

Pictured here are images of the women of Esidai, with Carol and with Anne, at work sewing masks and pads. We are proud to report that the women have been able to move from working together on a veranda (*top right*) to their very own workshop (*bottom right*).

Collaborating with Others

AKTF works closely with the Mara Conservancy, Angama Mara, Eden Wildlife Trust, Mara North Conservancy, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forestry Service, Mara Elephant Project, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, and many more, like Jim Nyamu and Elephant Neighbors Centre. We are extremely grateful for the support and partnership we enjoy with these organizations, and of course from all our private donors as well.

We are celebrating 12 years of boma building, and we must make special note that National Geographic has funded this project since the very beginning. We are so grateful and proud to be receiving their support, guidance, and partnership.



Thank you, Asante sana, Ashe oLeng!

