WILDLIFEDIRECT

Newsletter
Issue #14
August 21st, 2020

# WILDLIFE WARRIORS KIDS

**Hello Wildlife Warriors!**
**Stay connected to nature even when you are at home.**

Photo by Dr. Abdullahi Ali

In this week's Issue, we will focus on an antelope known as the **Hirola!** Have you ever seen a Hirola? Do you know how many Hirolas are left in the wild? Do you know why the Hirola is called the four-eyed antelope? Please read on! We continue to give you tips on how to take the **BEST** photographs for Season Two of the Nature's Treasures Photo Competition, wild jokes and much much more…

Stay with us on this fun filled adventure. Always remember to share with your family and friends.

# CONGRATULATIONS RAJ

Raj Jakharia (13 years) from Kenya won in the Nature's Treasures Photo Competition Junior Category on the theme Wildlife Portraits. The image captures cheetah brothers, known as "*Tano Bora*" in the Masai Mara, walking with the backdrop of the landscape. The judges commended Raj for capturing a perfect portrait of a family.

*Follow Raj Jakharia's work on Instagram to see more of his photos* @jadioboss.photography

**Season 2 of the Nature's Treasures Competition has Started!!! Submit 3 photos on the theme '*Wildlife Portraits*' by 14th August.**

# SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS

## NATURE'S TREASURES PHOTO COMPETITION

SEASON 2

**Theme: Wild Landscapes - Aug 15th to Aug 28th**

**Enter up to 3 photos to bit.ly/WildlifeWarriorsEA**

**Prizes!**

**Professional Category**
**Winner KES 5000**
**Runner up KES 3000**

**Amateur Category**
**Winner KES 3500**
**Runner up KES 2000**

**Junior Category (Under 15 years)**
**Winner KES 2000**
**Runner up KES 1000**

**Now inviting photographers from East Africa!**

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Nature photography for children offers a wide range of exciting and valuable learning opportunities.

If you are 15 years and below, you can submit your photos under the Junior Category and encourage your age mates to take part in the Wildlife Warriors Nature's Treasures Photo Competition here http://bit.ly/WildlifeWarriorsEA

**Go Out. Explore. Take Photos. Share.**

# UNDERSTANDING HIROLAS

There is only one species of Hirola.

- The name Hirola comes from the Somali name '*Arawla*' which refers to their rufous-tawny coat colour.
- Hirola is also known as the four-eyed antelope because of the white "spectacles like line" around the eyes.
- Hirola antelopes are listed as *Critically Endangered* with a population of fewer than **500** individuals in the wild.

- Hirola have a very small geographic range and are found in areas along the Kenya-Somalia border in the critical refuge sites including Ijara, Bura and Galmagala locations.

- There is also a small translocated population in Tsavo East National Park.

- The Hirola antelopes are grazers, mostly feeding on grass hence their preference of open grasslands. They feed on short newly sprouted grasses and forbs (herbaceous flowering plants). **Feeding on forbs allows them to go for longer periods without water.**

- Hirolas graze in the early morning and late evening.
- They have a gestation period of 8 months and give birth to only one calf

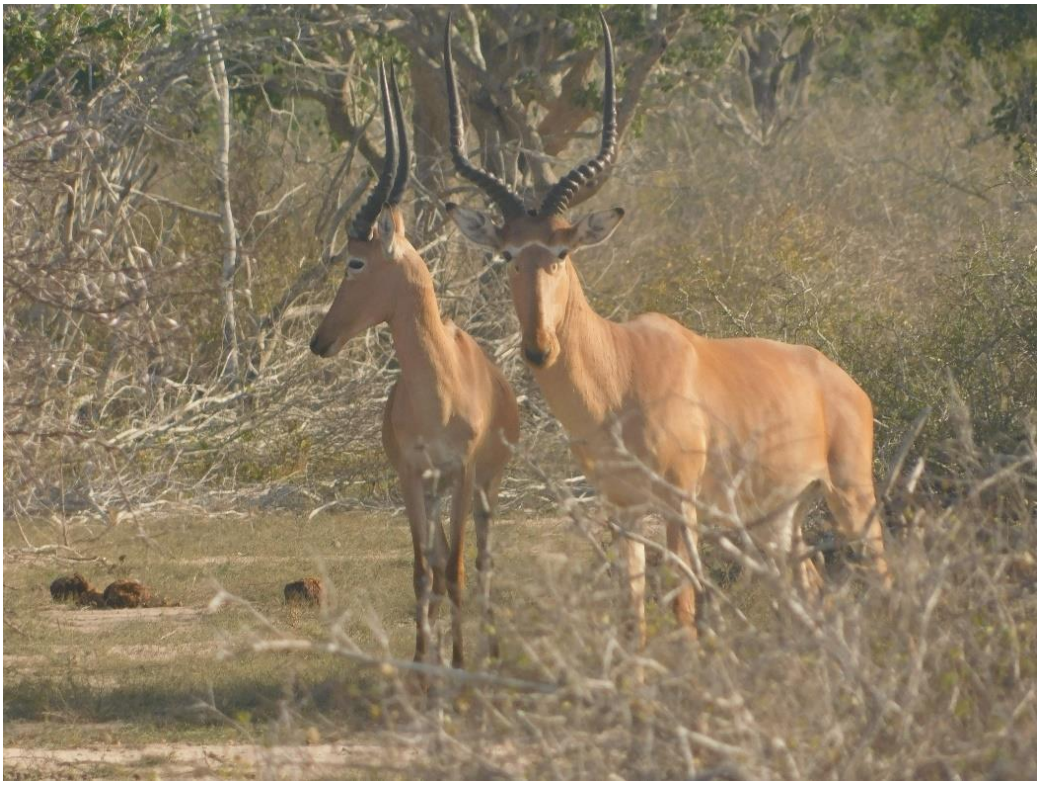
- Hirola predators include Lions, Leopards, Cheetahs, Hyenas, and African wild dogs.
- There are fewer than 500 Hirola antelopes in Kenya and in the whole world.

# WILD QUIZ

A group of Hirola antelopes is know as a…… ?

**Send your answer via SMS or WhatsApp to 0746 511787**
**The winner will be mentioned in the next issue!**

# THREATS FACING HIROLAS



- **Habitat loss:** This is as a result of over grazing, cutting down of trees and fire outbreaks.
- **Predation:** In the wild, Hirolas are prey to lions, African wild dogs, cheetahs, leopard and hyena.
- **Drought:** Long periods of no rainfall in the Hirola habitats lead to death as these animals lack food and water.
- **Disease:** Outbreaks of different animal diseases also tend to cause decline in the Hirola population.
- **Poaching:** Hirolas are killed illegally for their horns, skin and meat

*Article and photos courtesy of Dr. Abdullahi Ali*
*founder Hirola Conservation Program*

# WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP HIROLAS

- Habitat restoration of degraded habitat by planting indigenous grass species.
- Protect them from poachers
- Study more about Hirolas
- Tell a friend about their existence and conservation status
- Encourage parents to donate to Hirola conservation
- Become a Wildlife Specialist that specializes in Hirola Conservation

To learn more about Hirola conservation, Visit https://www.hirolaconservation.org/

# MEET DR. ABDULLAHI ALI

**Q: Tell us about yourself**

**A**: I was born and raised in Garissa County from a small pastoral community of Somali descent.

When I joined high school (in Thika), I was determined to learn more about the different wild animals which I grew up admiring when I was herding my family's livestock.

Curiosity led me to join the wildlife and environmental club and fortunately, I had a chance to visit the Masai Mara National Reserve.

I became even more fascinated by how different animals are, and this was when I settled on pursuing a career in conservation.

I later joined the University of Nairobi to pursue a Degree in Wildlife Management and Conservation and a Masters in Conservation Biology.

Finally, I did a PhD in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wyoming in the United States of America.

I chose to work in Garissa, my home town where multiple species of wild animals are threatened by extinction as there are very few scientists working to save them due to insecurity issues.

**Q: What was your favourite subject in school?**

A: My favourite subject was Biology.

**Q: What did you like to do when you were a boy?**

**A:** I enjoyed herding my family's livestock as it gave me a chance to interact with wildlife in grazing areas and water points.

**Q: How did you get interested in Hirolas and why?**

**A:** Having grown up and herded livestock in the same range as the Hirola antelope, I gained some liking and developed an attachment to them.

My passion and love for the species made me feel obligated to save the Hirola antelope. I could not stand watching them disappear from our ancestral landscape.

**Q: How can you tell the difference between a male and female Hirola?**

**A:** Females have narrow and slightly curved horns, while the males have larger curved horns with a thick base on their skull. Males also have a thicker neck circumference and appear more stronger.

**Q: What would you say to advise a child who wants to be a researcher or animal expert?**

**A:** It is all about curiosity and commitment, so start early, do small things that build on each other to establish a track record and remain focused and dedicated. It is so rewarding and fulfilling to work with animals so you will never look back once you launch your career

# PHOTO STORY OF THE WEEK
# THE GREAT MIGRATION

From July to September, the Great Wildebeest Migration sees thousands of wildebeests, gazelles, zebras and elands cross from the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania to the greener Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya.

This is one of the " **SEVEN NEW WONDERS OF THE WORLD"** and the largest animal migration in the world!!!

To get to Masai Mara, the Wildebeests have to cross the Mara River which has many crocodiles that hunt them.

On crossing the Mara River, more Wildebeest are preyed upon by lions, hyenas, cheetahs, leopards and other carnivores.

Towards the end of October, the rainy season begins in the Serengeti plains.

This instinctively triggers the wildebeest to begin the migration back to Tanzania, and thus the cycle continues each year.

*Photos by Anand Madhvani*

# WILD JOKES! 🤣

**Q: What does a Lion call an Antelope?**
**A: Fast food.**

**Q: What did the Antelope say to the grass?**
**A: It was nice gnawing you.**

**Q: What do you call Antelope eggs?**
**A: Cantaloupes.**

**Q: Why don't Antelopes play poker in the African Savannah?**
**A: There are too many Cheetahs.**

**Q: Who brings gifts to Antelopes?**
**A: Santalope.**

**Q: Why did the Antelope refuse to go on the rollercoaster?**
**A: Because she is anti-loops.**

**Q: What's an Antelope's favorite drink?**
**A: Fantalope.**

*Wild jokes courtesy of Eric Sasia*

# NATURE INVESTIGATIONS
## PART 4

Every time you want to learn about an animal or plant ask yourself six questions.

**Who, what, where, when, how and why.**

For example,

- If you see a hole you could ask "**Who** lives in this hole?"
- If you see marching ants carrying their babies along a path, ask yourself "**What** are they doing and **where** are they going?"

When you are investigating nature you are engaging your whole brain and all your senses - **sight, touch, smell, taste (only if it's safe to do so)**

- If the animals are out at night you could ask yourself "I wonder **when** they sleep?"

- If you see a bee on a flower you could ask "I wonder **how** does it collect pollen?"

- If your plant is only growing in the shade you might ask "**Why** doesn't this flower grow in the sun?

- You don't need to answer all your questions – but you can try to gather information by counting (e.g. number of petal, or measure e.g. the length of a leaf!)

*Nature Investigations by Dr. Paula Kahumbu*

**Take a photo** of the **work** you have done in **your journal and send it** to us via **WhatsApp on 0746 511 787** so that we can **share your amazing work with all the other kids.**

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP NATURE
# VOLUNTEERING

**This is when you spend some of your free time helping others.**

When is the best time to volunteer? During school holidays or weekends.

*Kimanzi volunteering during the 2019 Wildlife Warriors Kids expedition at Mpala Research Centre*

**This week, we will look at some of the ways you and your friends can volunteer your time to help nature.**

Remember to ask for permission from your parents. They can even join you in your activity!

**Remember the Tsavo fires?**

- Many people volunteered to help put out the fire. If they did not volunteer, maybe the fire would have spread to other parts of the park.
- Together with your friends, you can volunteer to keep your neighborhood tidy by picking up litter. Always put on gloves and use a stick to pick the trash, recycle or reuse the trash and safely dispose off the remaining waste in a garbage bag.
- Volunteer to help us in producing the Wildlife Warriors Weekly Newsletter by writing essays, or sharing the Newsletter with your friends and relatives.

**Share with us what you have done to help nature this week by sending an SMS or WhatsApp text to 0746 511 787**

# THIS WEEK ON MY WILD AFRICA

Have you been following the Cheetah Diaries episode on Citizen TV every Sunday at 5:30 PM? If yes, what have learnt so far about cheetahs?

This week, we meet Savannah, an 8-Year-Old Cheetah at the Cheetah Outreach Centre and younger cheetahs who are training to be ambassador cats for their species.

Watch the **film** with your family and tell us **what you learnt** by sending an **SMS** or **WhatsApp message** to **0746 511787**

# COMING UP… DON'T MISS

*Photo of a female Impala at Lake Nakuru National Park by Shiru Ndegwa (14 years)*

- **My Wild Africa on Citizen TV at 5:30pm on August 23rd, 2020**
- **World African Wild Dog Day is on August 26th, 2020**
- **International Whale Shark Day is on August 30th, 2020**

# FOR PARENTS

- Please tell us what you think of this newsletter by filling the second part of bit.ly/WWKIDS and we will get back to you.

- If you would love to support Wildlife Warriors Kids, please make a donation to:

**PAYBILL NO. 600100**

**A/C NO. 0100003937598**

Email us: info@wildlifedirect.org

Contact us on: +254 746 511 787

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