

Kasigau Corridor Aerial Surveillance Report



May - August 2016

QUARTERLY REPORT



1. Summary

The Kasigau Wildlife Corridor is located between Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Park and covers 200 square kilometers. The 14 group ranches that collectively make up this corridor provide an important habitat and dispersal area for wildlife between these two protected areas. There are approximately 11,000 elephants in the Tsavo ecosystem and roughly 2,000 of them that rely on the corridor as part of their movements in search for water between the two national parks.

Aerial surveillance is one of the most effective means of reducing wildlife crime, and is needed now more than ever in an effort to curb elephant poaching. Our daily aerial patrols are a vital tool in the effective prevention of elephant poaching, whilst increasing security overall and providing essential data needed to protect such expansive areas of land. Furthermore, aerial support also helps in identifying other illegal activities from the air, such as illegal charcoal burning, trespassing, illegal grazers and logging, which poses a great threat to the Kasigau Corridor and the future of the environment.



Elephants drinking at a dam in the Kasigau Corridor

2. Flight Information

Flight data

Total hours flown	179.5
Approx Distance covered	14,000 km
Fuel used	2,447 L



Pilot flying over Kasigau Corridor

Issues during the quarter

The aircraft experienced some delays and problems during the quarter. At the end of June the 1000 hour heavy service was conducted and grounded the aircraft for over 8 days. A new propeller was also installed due to extreme wear of the old propeller. Mid-August a reoccurring throttle sensor glitch caused some concern. A refurbished gearbox and sensor were installed. The source of the problem has not yet been solved by Rotax S.A.

3. Charcoal

As the project area gets dryer, increasing attempts at charcoal harvesting were seen. Washumbu and Kambanga ranch saw a steep rise despite constant pressure on logging sites. In August, although not inside the project area, kilns and illegal wood harvesting were actively destroyed in Bungule reserve near Kasigau by request from the Kasigau community landowners.

Charcoal data

Charcoal kilns	72
Log piles	225
Charcoal bags	78
Fence posts	54
Charcoal camps found	1
Arrests made	5

Arrest comments

Although 5 arrests were made, 8 people also were verbally warned at the police station then released. 1 charcoal truck with 70 bags of charcoal was captured and detained with 4 people on Washumbu ranch after trying to flee from rangers and air support. The bags were destroyed.



Charcoal kiln preparation



Charcoal truck arrested on Washumbu

4. Collared Elephants

Being able to check in on the collared elephants within the project area has been very exciting. The remaining water points appear to be the major factors on their movements.

Collared elephant data	
SGR collared elephants seen	2 individuals Rukinga and Taita
KWS collared elephants seen	2 individuals 1 bull and 1 female

Data sheets online [here](#)

SGR collared elephant activity: summary of movements and behaviors

Rukinga	Rukinga was continuously seen on the northern end of Rukinga ranch, often at the 5.5 water tank. For the first weeks of July he was spotted socializing with 2 other males, then later periodically mixing with breeding herds and other bulls. He then spent the middle-end of August socializing with a KWS collared male, who was spotted on Koranze ranch in July.
Taita	Taita made massive movements from the top of the ranches to right south into northern Mkomazi in Tanzania. Aerial surveillance first saw her on Wangala ranch with a group of 20 elephants, later on Koranze with over 200+ elephants near one of the last watering points in the southern ranches. She then made a move back north on to Taita ranch but was driven off Sagana dam by cattle herders, who made fires to stop elephants from drinking the last of their livestock water. She was then seen on Kasigau Ranch with a herd of 6 others. Water from a mining operation was not far away. Later she was back on Koranze with 66 elephants, with another 150 within 5 kms of her. Currently we documented her on Mgeno in a herd of 8 and socializing with other family group of 11 elephants. This area still holds multiple water sources.



KWS and SGR collared elephants together



Taita in a herd of 66 elephants, Koranze Ranch, TZ border

5. Elephants and other Wildlife

We are happy to announce that we have had no elephant poaching inside the project since February 2016. Significant wildlife sightings in the Kasigau Corridor included large numbers of elephants and almost daily sightings of Grevy Zebra. Lion have frequently been spotted inside the project area, cheetah have also been continuously seen and there was a sighting of wild dog. One cheetah was killed by herders on Taita ranch.

Other wildlife data

Maps of all elephant concentrations

See Appendix 1

General elephant movements and concentrations

May, June and July, large concentrations of 80-150 were seen on Taita and Washumbu ranch. As dams started to dry, the larger herds were seen on the northern end of Rukinga, mainly due to water access at 5.5 tank. LMD and northern Taita ranch also kept herds of 80-100 do to a burst water pipe. Koranze, which had 200+ in July, went down to around 100. The western ranches Kasigau, Maungu, Choke and Kutima still hold water in many of their dams, and in August we have seen approx 200+ elephants on them in tight groups. Currently the only water on the eastern ranches is on Rukinga, and in the community area north of Taita from the burst water pipe. See Appendix 2 for a selection of photographs.

Other interesting wildlife sightings

Grevy zebras were seen almost daily, with larger clusters of 5-8 individuals on Taita and Amaka ranch- see Appendix 3. Five groupings of cheetah were frequently spotted on the ranches- a mother with 4 adult cubs, a mother with three juveniles and two separate pairs of males and one coalition of three males. Lions were being seen more and more frequently throughout the quarter with prides of 2,5,7 and 8 individuals being followed. A pack of 4 wild dog was seen on Sagalla ranch.

Elephant carcasses found

Outside of project area

- No elephants died within the project area. However 1 female 15-20 years was found on neighboring KARI farm near Mombassa highway. Cause of death: ingestion of poisonous substance. Tusks recovered.
- 3 elephants killed on transit from the corridor to Tsavo East by vehicle and train. One being an infant- see Appendix 4 for photo.
- 1 bull died of natural causes on neighboring Luaylenyi ranch after fighting another male. Tusks recovered.

Large mammal carcasses

- 1 large male giraffe was spotted intact on Taita ranch, cause of death presumed natural. No sign of predation or poaching means.
- 1 cheetah killed by herders on Taita ranch.

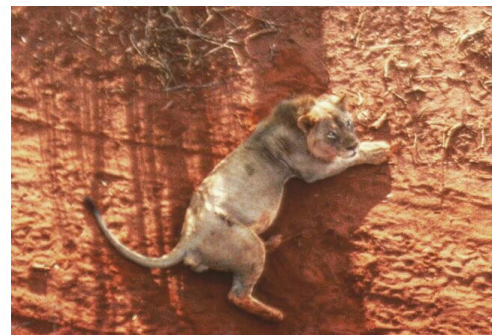
Other security incidents

138 snares recovered from ground team, many found not far from charcoal kilns.

For all patrol tracks month by month see Appendix 5



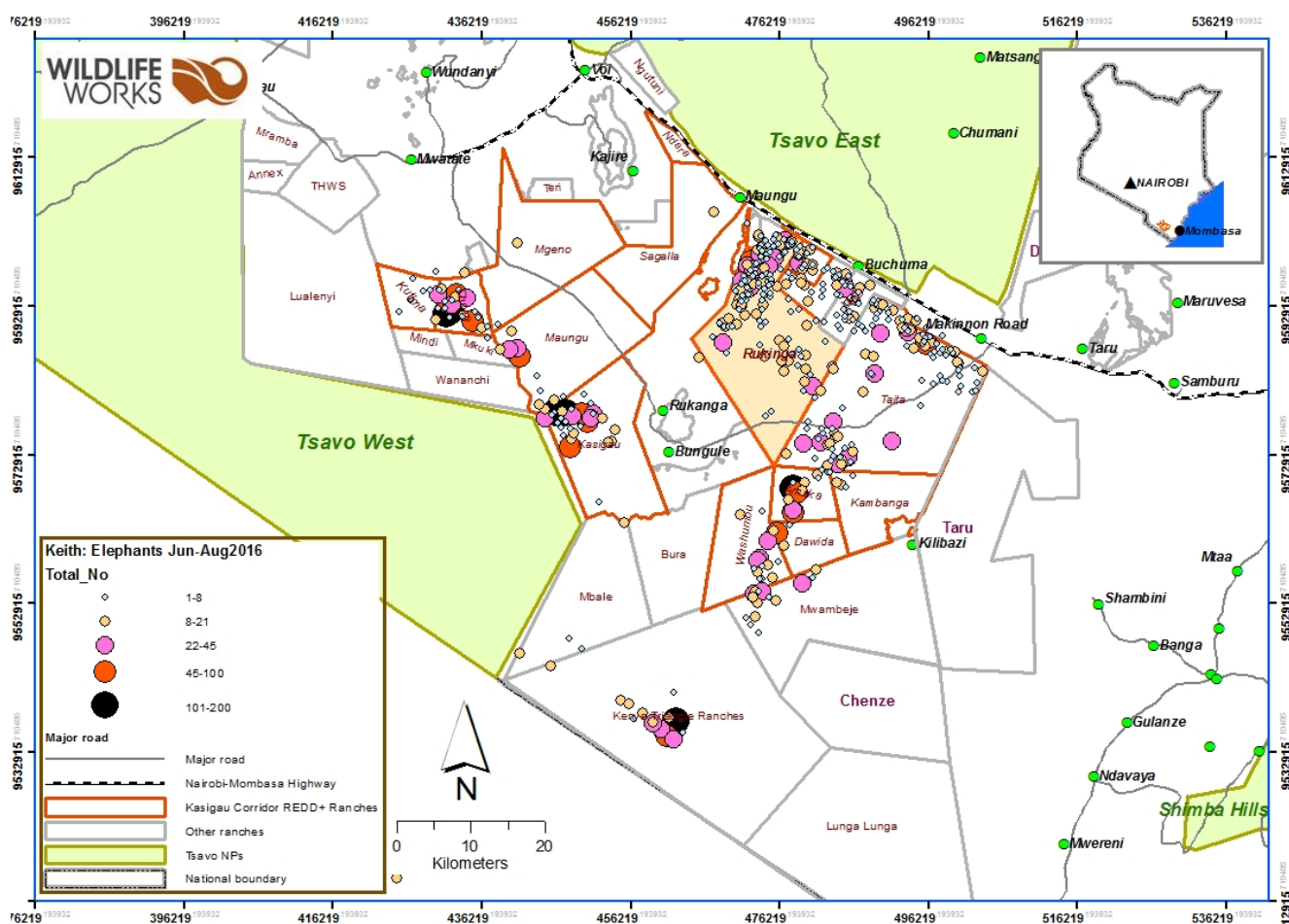
Cheetah killed on Taita Ranch



Lion on Jojoba Ranch

6. Appendices

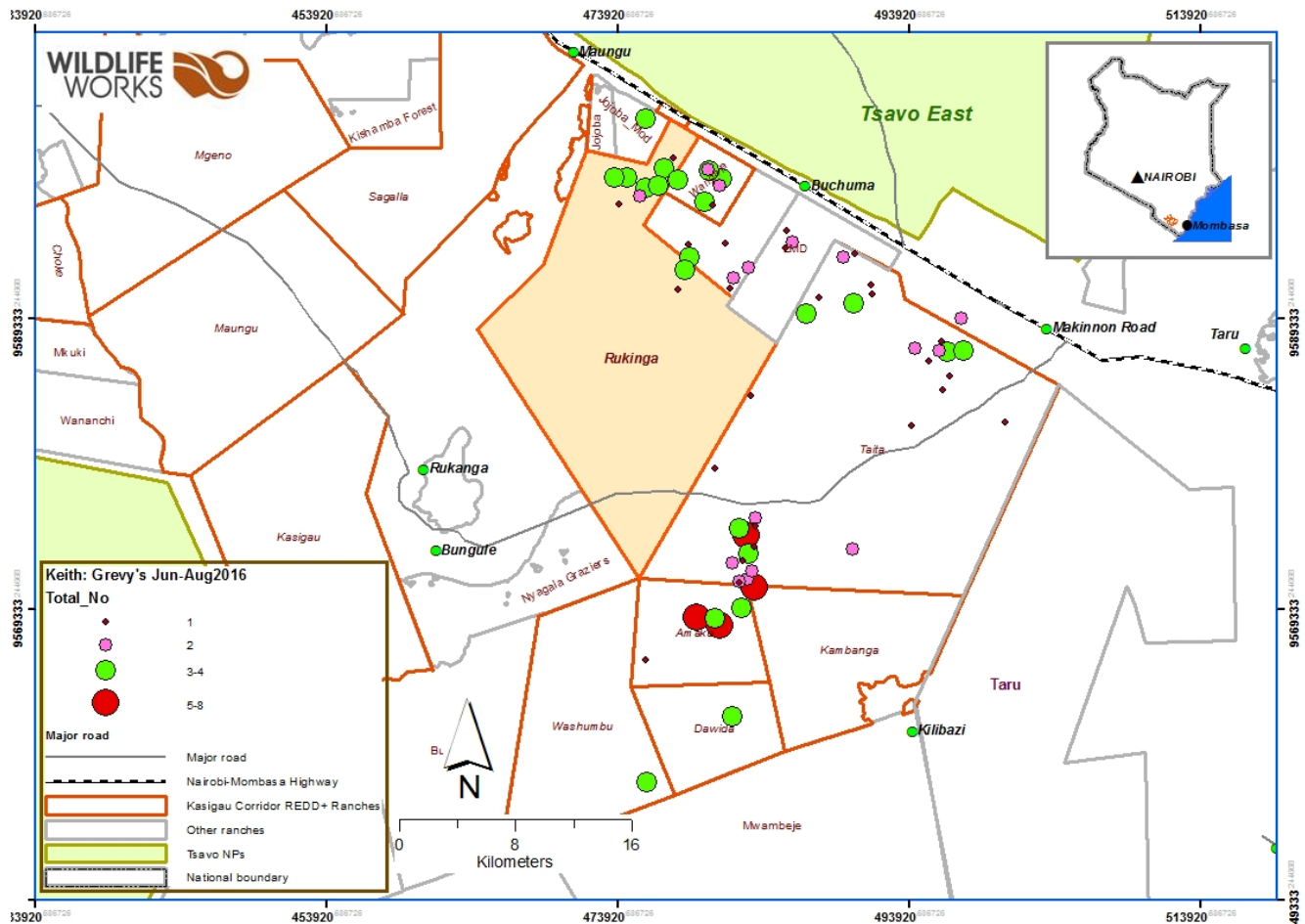
Appendix 1: Maps of elephant concentrations



Appendix 2: Additional aerial photographs of elephants observed



Appendix 3: Grevy Zebra sightings



Appendix 4: Infant elephant killed on Mombasa Highway, close to Maungu



The map displays the Tsavo region in Kenya, highlighting the Tsavo West and Tsavo East National Parks. The Nairobi-Mombasa Highway is shown as a dashed line. The Kasigau Corridor REDD+ Ranches are outlined in orange. Other ranches are shown in light green. The map includes a legend, a scale bar, and an inset map of Kenya.

Legend:

- Major road
- Nairobi-Mombasa Highway
- Kasigau Corridor REDD+ Ranches
- Other ranches
- Tsavo NPs
- National boundary

Scale: 0 to 20 Kilometers

Inset Map: Shows the location of the study area within Kenya, with Nairobi and Mombasa marked.

