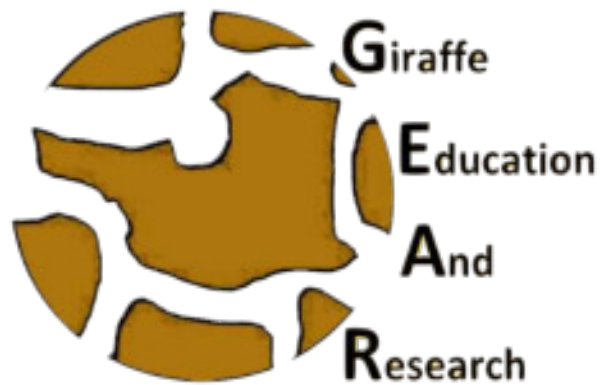


Giraffe Education And Research (GEAR) Lake Mburo National Park



Update Report

August 2018

Supported by



Collaboration with Uganda Wildlife Authority

In July the GEAR Coordinators had several meetings with local UWA personnel including Asa Kule, the Chief Warden of Lake Mburo National Park (LMNP), and Matanda Godfrey, the Warden of Community Conservation and acting Warden of Research and Monitoring. During these meetings, a collaborative monitoring and education programme was established for the time period until the end of 2018.

So far this partnership has produced the below results.

Monitoring trips

GEAR local researcher Natamba Jotham conducts regular monitoring trips to LMNP together with UWA Research and Monitoring. These trips are currently conducted three trips per week.



School trips

Together with the UWA Community Conservation Rangers GEAR has facilitated four school trips in to the National Park. The groups from St. Steven's and Nshara Parents Schools were both lucky enough to see the giraffe during their visits. While the groups from St. Marks and Shammacon Primary Schools from Akageti unfortunately did not manage to find the giraffe during their visits to LMBP, they still had an enjoyable time and the students were excited to see other wildlife. The follow-up visits to these schools as well as visits to other remaining school will be conducted after students return to school for the next term. See trip report from St. Steven's School attached to this report.



Drones for monitoring purposes

GEAR has approached Ndege Skies, a professional Ugandan drone company, to determine the feasibility of using drones for monitoring of the giraffe population in LMNP. During July and August, it was difficult to locate the giraffe, which has resulted in limited observations. As giraffe might spend extended periods in areas of the Park that are not readily accessible, giraffe observations may not reflect the true movements of the population due to limited data availability. We believe that giraffe traverses the thickly bushed ridges where there is no road access. GEAR is now investigating the feasibility of using drones for improved monitoring of giraffe to assess movements in support park management.

During a visit by GCF Directors, Julian and Stephanie Fennessy, at the end of August we discussed GEAR's goals and operations and how to move forward. During a meeting of UWA, GCF and Kacheera Camp it suggested that GEAR should operate as a programme implemented and supported collaboratively by the

three organisations. Moving forward, the partners aim to develop a sustainable financial mechanism to support local giraffe education, giraffe conservation and management activities in and around LMNP. Different fundraising models were discussed, including auctioning off the naming rights of the new giraffe calves at the Park. The three partners are now working on developing a budget and operations procedures to carry GEAR in to a long-term, sustainable programme.



Giraffe News

We are very excited to confirm that six giraffe calves have been born in LMNP so far, increasing the total giraffe population of the Park to 21 individuals. After the April birth of Morse's calf, we eagerly awaited the arrival of more new additions. Marion was next in line and was spotted with her new calf in June. We are excited to confirm that the calf is female.

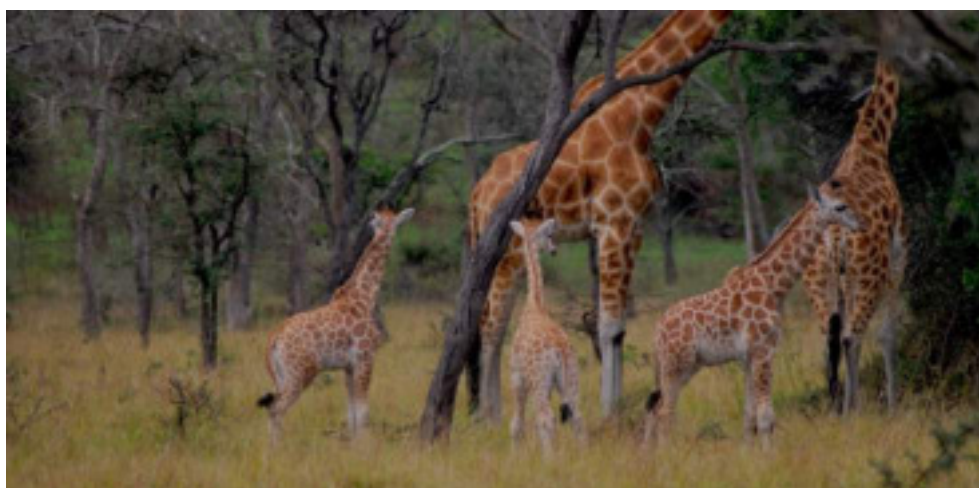


Left: Doting mum Marion with her calf. The male Rocket was keeping a close eye on Marion as well.

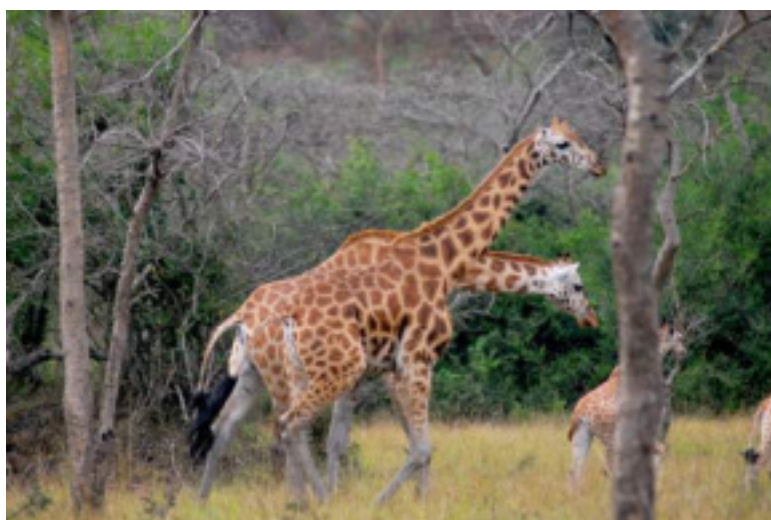
Right: Marion and Morse's calves are often found together. Marion's calf on the left, Morse's on the right.



When we spotted Juliana in early July, we strongly suspected that she had given birth too. However, it was only six weeks later that we spotted her again – this time with a male calf in tow. She was accompanied by Ru and Batgirl, both of which had new calves too. Both calves were very young with their umbilical cords still attached and their sex could not yet be determined.

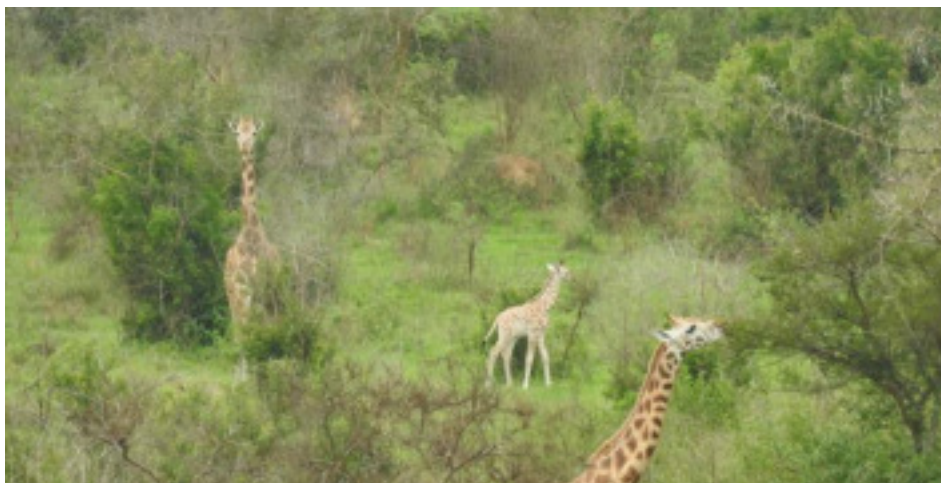


Left: The three newest calves together. Juliana's calf is the larger one on the right.



Left: Mum's Ru (in the front) and Batgirl keeping close to their calves.

We suspected that Suni might have given birth too. We would finally confirm this when we spotted her on 6 September together with yet another calf. Exciting times for giraffe at LMNP.



We suspect that more of the remaining five females may also be pregnant, so we expect to discover more calves over the next few months.

Nicky (pictured) and Valentine are the next expected to produce.



In July and August we observed the giraffe in different groups and spreading throughout the Park. In the past, we usually found all individuals in Acacia/Zebra track valley but lately they have moved to both the western and eastern sectors of the Park. We suspect that this split can be attributed to a combination of factors: Two large bush fires recently spread through the Park, starting from beyond its borders and spreading through. While most giraffe appeared happy to move through the freshly burnt areas Marion and Morse initially remained in the Acacia/Zebra valley with their calves. However, they too soon moved away from the valley and to the western part of the Park. An UWA ranger reported seeing the calves agitated during a night drive when also finding the pug marks of the one lion residing in the Park. His presence may have driven the mums and calves to the other section of the Park. We did not see Juliana, Ru and Batgirl at all during this time, most likely as they hid in thicker bushes to give birth and hid their newborn calves.

Populations Dynamics:

Date	Herd Size	Giraffe IDs	GPS - S	GPS - E	Photo Numbers	Behaviour/Notes
31.07.18	4	Marion, Morse & calves	0.59974	30.9802	103-01	Calves eating <i>Acacia sp.</i>
31.07.18	10	Leiden, Valentine, Suni, Bernard, Nicky, Caroline, Kule, Rocket, Mystry	63467	31.01188	103-0125	Leiden & Kule testing Caroline, Suni eating <i>A. polyantha</i> , Nicky pregnant, Rocket bumpy skin observed, Irish with skin disease on neck.
04.08.18	4	Marion, Morse & calves	0.59555	30.98045	08/17 onwards	
	5	Bernard, Kule, Rocket, Leiden			91/91	
06.08.18	0	-	-	-	-	-
09.08.18	2	Bernard, Leiden	0.59552	30.9866	103/053	
11.08.18	0	-	-	-	-	-
14.08.18	4	Bernard, Leiden, Kule, Rocket	0.6453	31.00781	103/0553-61	
15.08.18	4	Bernard, Leiden, Kule, Rocket	0.64183	31.00486		
21.08.18	4	Marion, Morse & calves	0.56119	30.9805		
22.08.18	4	Marion, Morse & calves	0.56115 1	30.9802	103/0570	
27.08.18	10	Bernard, Ru, Caroline, Juliana, Batgirl, Mystery, Nicky & 3 calves	0.3402	30.58304 6	103/0577	Three calves spotted. Oldest male for Juliana, two younger calves still with umbilical cord attached. One for Ru other believed for Batgirl
28.08.18	11	Bernard, Caroline, Irish, Batigril, Julianana, Nicky, Mystery, Ru & 3 calves	0.56153	30.98021	103-0600	Ru suckled calf

Activity Budgets

Month: August
Observers: Jotham, Michael, Miriah, Iddy,

Observers: Nathan

Hour: 7-8am 8-9am 9-10am 10-11am 11-12pm 12-1pm 1-2pm 2-3pm 3-4pm 4-5pm 5-6pm 6-7pm

Activity

Feeding		26		13	10	11	28					
Resting					14		8					
Ruminating				3	7	3	15					
Walking		19		2	8	15	21					
Grooming		1			13		1					
Sexual Behaviour												
Excretion		1				4	3					
Vigilance		4		4	11	5	21					
Interaction		5		2			21					
Drinking												
Other					2		4					

Total 0 56 0 24 65 38 122 0 0 0 0 0

A REPORT ABOUT THE GAME PARK TRIP HELD ON 3RD AUGUST 2018 BY ST. STEVEN MODEL SCHOOL.

This report gives information on the trip which was held on the date mentioned above.

The purpose of this report is to give the information that was gathered about different animals and their behaviours most especially giraffes.

By the help of the game rangers, we identified different animal species and their behaviours. We examined different animals and also tried to count them.

We also compared different animal behaviours in accordance to gender, protection from enemies, social life and their feeding habits.

We also looked at one family of giraffes (4 members) and their behaviours.

During the trip, we found that the number of giraffes in K. Mburu National park is 18 and also looked at one family of only 4 members.

Basing on the behaviours of one family. We found that every giraffe in the world is different from the other.

Out of 4 giraffes identified in the trip, 2 were males and the other two were females whereby there were two other calves.

By the help of the binoculars, we identified only one individual (Morse) which was standing.

We found that the gestation period of an adult giraffe is 14.5 months and produces young ones alive. An adult giraffe weighs 2600kgs.

Other features that were identified are;

horns that are covered by white skin.

horns that are cartilage like (ossicones).

We also found out that giraffes are browsing animals which helps them to feed on pods and leaves.

In addition, we also identified the type of giraffes that do not have spots below their knees which was called the Nubian giraffe.

On the other hand, we also looked at other animal species which include zebras, waterbuck, warthog, baboon, Buffalo, Impala, Topi, vervet monkeys and many others.

Zebras are the commonest animal species that you cannot move a distance without meeting their group.

Some bird species were also identified which include; ox pecker, eagles, Heron, and many others.

We also reached at L. Mburo whereby we found that L. Mburo was formed as a result of down warping.

Lastly, the trip was very interesting however pupils met some of the challenges.

Rare animals were not seen which made them unhappy. All numbers were not seen and most these were the nocturnals.

We also faced a challenge of poor roads while in the park.

In conclusion, we thank The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) for sponsoring our trip and supporting environmental education in L. Mburo National Park.

We also extend ^{our} ~~our~~ words of thanks to the game rangers who took their time to guide us on different

parts during the trip.

In summary, Pupils were able to do different activities like; leave rubbing, Drawing and shading, counting and tally of different animals writing stories about the trip, and identifying different giraffes.

We managed to take only 3 classes (40 pupils) and the chances of other pupils were limited by the number provide by the organisers.

Therefore we would wish that the number of pupils be increased and this gives chance to other members to visit the park.

We are very glad, if at some point other pupils are given opportunity to see the giraffes and their ~~funels~~ trip funded as well.

"WE LOOK FORWARD TO WILD LIFE EDUCATION"

This report was compiled in partnership with and supported by:

