

2013 In Brief

*Yearly surveys, conducted since project inception, have helped quantify the positive effects the Kibale Fuel Wood Project and Kibale Eco-Char Initiative have been having for both people around Kibale and the forest itself. This year's numbers confirm - thanks to your support, we're still making a difference. More people are planting trees. More people are using efficient stoves, and stoves have shown the greatest fuel savings to date, using **35% less wood** than those still cooking on traditional three-stone fires.

*Michael Stern, Project Director, tasted **47** different preparations of beans in December 2013 as a judge at our fuel-efficient bean cook-offs! Want to join us next year? Just send an email and we'll help tailor a trip to your specifications - dietary and otherwise!



*Briquettes made from recycled farm waste have shown a dramatic increase in use and production. Full details will be listed in the annual report, to be released next month, but consider November through the years: November 2011 saw 1,030 briquettes produced; 4,864 in November 2012; **6,536 in November 2013**. Hopefully, by next year, we'll have even more than Ronald and John, two of the production team pictured below, can show off easily.

* To thank community members who went above and beyond as traders of farm waste for briquettes, we honored our **TOP THREE TRADERS** with efficient stoves and holiday treats! The big winner traded over **2,400 lbs** in 2013, earning her **4,364 briquettes** and saving more than **3,200 lbs** of natural firewood.

December's Competitions

For three years, NNF has sponsored environmental singing, dancing and poetry competitions. Some of this year's entries:

Oh man! Oh man! Oh man!
Be kind to me as I am to you.
Forget not that I saved you and your family.
When you were starving,
You and your children crawled on my chest,
Broke off my breasts, and sucked them.
Then you survived.
When you were sick,
You exposed my many feet,
You broke off my toes and chewed them.
Then you survived.
Oh man! Oh man! Oh man!
Be kind to me as I am to you.
Do not forget that I saved you and your crops.
When you and your crops were withering to death,
I sweated and cried for you,
And they dropped down as rain.
You and your crops survived.
When you and your animals
Were suffocating to death,
You sat under my thick shade,
You took my bad breath,
And I took your bad one too.
You and your animals survived.
Oh man! Oh man! Oh man!
Be kind to me as I am to you.
Remember that without me
There's no medicine, oxygen, and rain.
Let local leaders, religious leaders and businessmen
Sensitize people to stop deforestation.
Tree was my name.



Elephant, elephant,
Where have you been?
I have been to the river,
Washing myself clean.
Elephant, elephant,
What did you see?
I saw a gray parrot,
High up in a tree.
Elephant, elephant,
Why do you move?
I do so in search of food.
Elephant, elephant,
You are so large and pretty.
And most of the tourists come to see me.

But No!
All is not yet gone!
We can still join hands
To combat deforestation
And save the surviving forests.
Government officials!
Arrest anyone
Found guilty of deforestation.
Let's embrace and develop
A culture of replacing trees
In deforested areas.
We shall retain the beauty
Of our Motherland!

The theme for 2013 was deforestation: what it is, how it affects us and Kibale, and what we can do to reduce these effects on our villages and wildlife. At four day-long events, attended by nearly 1,600 people, 17 groups with members of all ages competed for great prizes while sharing what they had learned about habitat destruction and what they think we can all do to help.



Briquette Maker Takes to the Field

King Solomon (yes, you read that right) has been making briquettes with NNF for the past two years. Recently, he took a leave of absence to act as an assistant for a PhD student in Kibale. The researcher was interested in growth rates of trees in primary vs. planted forests, and was re-surveying spots that had been studied earlier.

King was excited to return to the forest and “maintain his knowledge”, as he had worked as a botanical assistant in the past. He was responsible for identifying, mapping and measuring all trees within numerous 50x10 meter grids, as well as all the grasses and herbs in smaller, 1x1 meter plots. This is not the first time a project staff member has gained employment in the park, and we are always happy when this happens as it helps improve the relationship between the protected area and

surrounding communities while reminding people of the forest’s magnificence and right to exist.

King grew up near Kibale, and first learned about her amazing flora and fauna through the “open house” education program run by Marij Steenbeek in the early 1990s. He then took a butterfly course with researcher Freerk Moleman (co-founder of Books Open the World). He enjoys seeing animals in the forest, though he is a little fearful of elephants. If he were a tree, he’d like to be a *Prunus*, since they are so common. “Everyone would know me!” He advises fellow field assistants to “dress smart”, as this can help attract employment from researchers. Still, he was happy to return to work making Kuchumbricks, since he prefers being close to home and working together with friends to “bring the community together and teach them not to destroy the forest”.

Volunteering in Uganda

Hello from Uganda! My name is Randy Campbell and I am a volunteer with the New Nature Foundation. I recently sold my house and left my job of 17-years as a Sr. Zookeeper at the San Diego Zoo. Why? Everyone asked. I said I wanted to do more for the environment, including more for animals! So when I found out about NNF I knew I had found the perfect place to make my goals come true. Again, people asked, why? And my answer was simple: people. What, you ask? Yes, people.

People play a big role in the environment, hence they are key players in conservation efforts. Working together with NNF, people are making a positive difference for the environment.

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Staff Spotlight!

Full Name: Margaret Kemigisa Atwooki

Position: New Nature Foundation Project Manager

Age: 33

Favorite Food (African): Millet with cow meat & mushrooms

Favorite Food (Worldwide): Pizza!

Favorite Animal: Elephant. "Such amazing and unique animals, and I don't know why, but elephants have been in my dreams for years."

Margaret is one of nine brothers and sisters who all grew up bordering Kibale National Park. She has three children of her own adding to the nearly 30 grandchildren that complete this abundant and loving family. We (Michael and Becka) certainly feel like a part of this family as well, celebrating holidays and joyous occasions together and always bringing mom and dad sweets and goodies from the US. (*Noted favorites are Entenmann's donuts and Tastykakes*).

Margaret began her career in 1999 as the first female field assistant to work in Kibale. Since then she has traveled the world, taught in schools and throughout local communities, and has been an integral part of NNF's success.

Along with managing NNF's projects, and raising her sons (aged 8, 6 & 3), Margaret started the Community Action Project (CAP), a registered Community Based Organization that empowers community members through craft making, better farming practices, and conserving natural resources. One CAP project is bee keeping, with over 50 hives producing honey, propolis and wax to make candles, all of which are sold. While she started out quite afraid of bees, trial and error have taught her how to avoid an attack! CAP also has a tea seedling project, cultural entertainment groups, and a very successful hand-crafts shop (with over 150 families from 4 different villages participating in the co-op).

But she's not finished yet! Margaret also owns a guesthouse, which sleeps 11 people. Called the Rainforest Guest House, visitors can enjoy clean and comfortable rooms, lovely dinner with the family, and of course craft shopping! In the remaining hours of the day, Margaret's hobbies include candle making, sewing, running a second hand clothes store, a wedding rental service and community activism, and she has occasionally been mistaken for a midwife.

With so many interests and activities, we asked Margaret why conservation is so important to her. "The park is our neighbor. I watched it change as I grew up. I feared what might happen to the park and those who illegally enter it for resources. My father helped protect this park, and it seems to just be a part of who I am." This life-long dedication helps her inspire communities to help her conserve Kibale.

Being such an excellent hostess, we asked Margaret to describe Uganda in three words and this is what she replied: "Beautiful, Lovely, and Friendly!"

She's quite a positive influence on those around her, and we hope this brief bio gives you the opportunity to know her better and see what a rare gem she truly is. Better yet, she'd love to meet you herself, so please, as she would say, "Welcome to Uganda!"



Volunteering, Continued

Utilizing alternative fuel sources for cooking, citizens are directly helping conserve the natural habitat. Also, through efficient stoves, tree projects and education, the project is bringing the communities together in understanding the importance of the park and its wildlife.

As a volunteer, I was able to work with an amazing group of people. Most days I was involved in the preparation and making of eco-briquettes. We would collect sawdust, castor oil seeds and goat dung (when necessary), shred paper, pound matooke (grinding banana peels was the hardest job ever) and shell castor oil seeds, all in preparation for making the briquettes. During this time my co-workers were always talking, joking, and singing. It is such a positive place to work. From day one, everyone was friendly, supportive, and helpful. Once the preparations were done, we would start to make the actual briquettes. This was, to me, the most fun. We would turn up the music and start. Mixing all our ingredients with water, filling up the cylinder forms with our mix, squeezing (my favorite part) the water out, and then pushing the cylinder forms out to get the briquettes. The best part of the day was hearing how many we had made.

On other days I participated in efficient stove building, talked about the briquettes and gave informal environmental talks. On the weekends I would spend time at the Science Centers, talking about animals and the environment with a variety of visitors and the Science Center educators. I even had time to trek chimpanzees in Kibale National Park, something I had dreamed of doing all my life.

I would like to thank Kemigisa Margaret, the project manager and my host in Uganda. She made me feel welcome and comfortable in her home. She has a great relationship with the staff and the community. Her energy is endless and she has a great passion for the NNF, the environment and the people of her community. This is, by far, a worthy project and I feel honored to have participated in it. I am sad my time here has run out. I know that three months is a short time but I leave with a lifetime of memories.



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 • info@newnaturefoundation.org. •
 •.....

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