

May 2007

# Kibale Community Fuel Wood Project UPDATE

A program of the Chimp-n-Sea Wildlife Conservation Fund

## Harvest time!

Planted as seeds in July 2006, our first trees have now come of age.

Utilizing empty space around the borders of a small farm, the planting method promoted by the project has been quite successful. At the Kaburala Center, our main demonstration area, over 125 trees were planted around the farm, without taking any space away from the crops. In fact, the nitrogen-fixing capability of these indigenous trees has helped to fertilize the crops they border. This method is attractive to the majority of local citizens, who do not have the space needed for a traditional wood lot.

By early April, the average tree height at Kaburala was 10.2 feet, with some trees over 16 feet tall! At the beginning of the rainy season, 45 of the trees were harvested. Other trees were left standing to provide seeds for the future, and to help determine the most effective harvest method for this area. (Trees at the five other demonstration areas were left standing for these same reasons.)

In all, the cut trees provided over 32 pounds

of firewood and 30 pounds of leaves suitable for use as a healthy livestock forage. We expect to be able to re-cut these trees in October 2007.

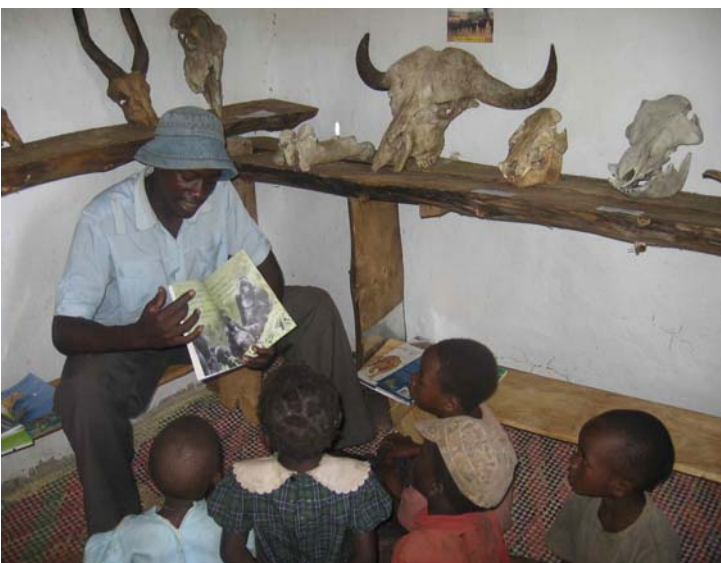
Though tests are continuing to help maximize production even further, this first round has been very promising. Home-grown wood *can* save Kibale!



## Sensational Science Center

When we last updated you, the Science Center had just had its grand opening, the walls were freshly painted and all we had were very high hopes. Now in its eighth month of operation, the Center has become a huge highlight of the KCFWP. Open an average of three days each week, the center enjoys a monthly attendance of nearly 500 visitors!

The collection has grown to include over 40 artifacts, and the bright white walls are now covered with posters about conservation, photos of the world's amazing biodiversity, maps and informative graphics. (*Continued on page 3*)



*Haraka reading to visitors at the Science Center*

## Cutting Down Kibale



*Chopping the park down...*



*...Carrying the park away*

*The future of Kibale, and the fate of its surrounding villages, hangs in the balance.*

National parks in Uganda are revered for their income-generation and benefits to the environment, but also for the materials they provide to citizens. These materials range from the medicines hiding within trees and flowers, to cutting down a national park for firewood. The latter seems inexcusable, yet happens every day in Kibale.

Officially, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) allows villagers over 18 years of age to enter Kibale on Saturdays to collect left over pines, planted before the forest became a national park (in 1996). Officially, these “off-cuts” are the only wood that can leave Kibale legally.

In reality, villagers of all ages are arbitrarily cutting down the natural forest. The stands of pine and left over wood are just too deep in the park to make easy collection possible. When questioned, UWA accepts the reality and points to a lack of adequate staffing and the need to better sensitize the community. The community members often realize that they are breaking the law, but in the daily struggle to provide enough wood for their family to cook with, this has become a minor concern. The future of Kibale, and the fate of its surrounding villages, hangs in the balance.

UWA clearly cannot react to this

## A Chimp's Story

As forests around Kibale disappear, chimpanzees and other animals that once moved freely between the park and other areas are now facing some real problems. According to scientists at the Kibale Chimpanzee Project, it has been many months since they

problem alone, as it has been on going since gazettement of the park and includes many complex hurdles. A comprehensive plan of action is needed.

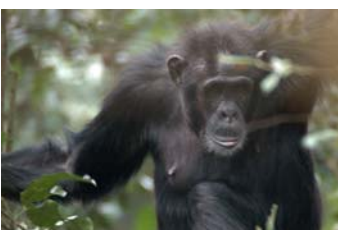
This begins with documenting what is being taken, how, when, and where. Others have already exposed much of the problem, and our personal observations have added to this knowledge base.

Next, address the why: people are taking wood because they don't have other sources. Slowly but surely, the KCFWP tree planting and efficient stove campaigns are addressing the problem by providing sustainable alternatives. The education campaign is helping develop a better people-park relationship.

Finally, stop both legal and illegal encroachment into Kibale for fuel wood. During the expansion phase (details on page 4), we hope to collaborate with UWA to remove the remaining “legal” wood from Kibale. This will make it much easier for UWA to enforce the current laws.

Cooperating with local communities and government agencies, the KCFWP is helping to better protect the forest while assisting villagers to meet their own needs. Please join our fight to save one of the world's greatest natural treasures.

have seen any members of the “village community”, a group of chimps that once roamed amongst the forest fragments scattered around the park. Many, undoubtedly, have died. Lucky females may have been accepted into (*continued on the next page*)



## Chimp Story, continued

neighboring communities. But for a few unlucky male chimps, survival has meant an existence on the razor's edge, surreptitiously gathering food wherever available in what was once their bountiful home range. This is the story of one of those chimps.

It is impossible to know exactly what became of the other members of Kiki's group. For several years, he has been alone. For social creatures like humans and chimpanzees, living alone can be an intense hardship. Sharing nearly 99% of our DNA, chimps also share many of our psychological attributes. Deprived of the support and interaction of his group, he focused only on surviving. For some time, there were no problems as he secretly crept between the remaining forest fragments, eating natural foods. But as these fragments disappeared, cut for firewood, his search for food inevitably brought him closer to humans.

For the past few years, Kiki has been seen periodically in villages along Kibale's northwest boundary. Raiding people's farms for food, he soon became known as a "problem animal", and villagers became frightened. Isolation and stress have driven

him to uncommon behavior, and there have been some aggressive encounters. Fulfilling their duty of protecting the park while working with local communities, the Ugandan Wildlife Authority decided to tranquilize Kiki and move him to a safer area. But this was not as easy as it seemed.

In October of 2006, the move was attempted. Repeatedly, officers failed to successfully sedate the chimp. It was decided that, in the interests of the villagers and with an eye toward stemming any bad feelings toward the park (and it's resident chimps), Kiki would be shot. But this, too, proved difficult.

*(Continued on the next page)*



## Science Center, continued

The audience is extremely diverse, from mothers with infants on their backs to secondary school students to the old men with their walking sticks. They all come to look, read (the library includes over 75 titles) and learn, or sometimes just sit and watch what is happening around them.

Aside from acting as an exciting draw for people to learn about tree planting and efficient stoves, the Science Center has also been a wonderful base for the project's educational contests. Since the last update, two additional contests have been held, with a total of 134 entries and 25 winners. Contest themes included both creative and non-fiction

writing, and winners read their work to the large crowds gathered at the traveling movie show. A weekly art class compliments the event agenda.

The Center has also hosted a stove-building workshop, attended by people interested in helping their families become more fuel-efficient. Two more workshops were held at other demonstration areas.

Overall, the Science Center has been one of the most popular portions of the KCFWP, and we look forward to opening at least two additional museums in other villages around Kibale during the project's expansion phase, June 2007 - May 2009. More information regarding the expansion can be found on page 4.

## Chimp Story, continued

Kiki took a bullet in the arm, but escaped into a forest fragment. Following his spoor, trackers found a spot where Kiki stopped, held leaves over his wound to stop the bleeding, then continued on. Failing to find him for several months, he was assumed to be dead.

In February 2007, against all odds, Kiki was spotted. His struggle along the boundary of Kibale continues, though he has been hesitant to approach people since his shooting.

Kiki's fate and that of his family could be shared by the more than 1,400 chimpanzees that currently call Kibale home, if we don't act to protect their final refuge. With more than 11% of the total population of Eastern chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*), along with countless other endemic and endangered species, reducing Kibale to firewood would be a tragedy. It's not too late to save this amazing place - please help us!

## What's Next?

The pilot year of the KCFWP ends this month. Project activities will continue for two more years, before handing over major responsibilities to local communities. So what's coming up?

During the first phase of project expansion, June 2007 - May 2008, we'll continue working with current partners while also expanding to include two more areas that border Kibale, the Sebitoli and Kanyange Parishes. These areas were picked after consultation with UWA, as they could each benefit from the project. Sebitoli has an intense struggle for wood, while Kanyange has major problems with crop raiding animals leaving the park. The education, stove and tree campaigns should prove as effective in these new areas as they have this year. At least one additional science center will be opened during this phase. In

June of 2008, the project will expand again, adding at least two more Parishes and one additional science center.

By spreading the message of home-grown wood to villages staggered along Kibale's border, we are paving the way for an organic diffusion of ideas in the years to come.

You can learn more this summer, live and in person, as we'll be lecturing throughout North America. Visit [www.chimp-n-sea.org](http://www.chimp-n-sea.org) for details.



The Kibale Community Fuel Wood Project is a program of Chimp-n-Sea Wildlife Conservation Fund, a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Mark Laxer, President

NEW ADDRESS:

480 Hogback Road

Johnson, Vermont 05656

More Photos and Info on the Website!

[www.chimp-n-sea.org](http://www.chimp-n-sea.org)

~AND~

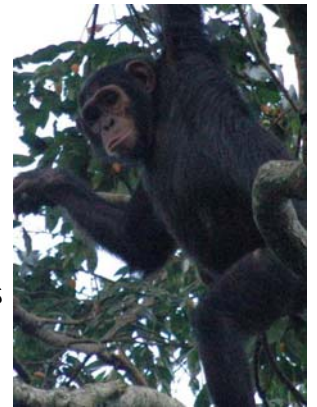
Find out about the Summer 2007 North American Dissemination and Fundraising Tour - we'd love to meet you this summer!

# Thank You!

The Kibale Community Fuel Wood Project has been made possible through the generous support of the following individuals and organizations:



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*Thank you all very much!*

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Please write "Kibale" on your check's memo line.  
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