

Spring
2008

Kibale Community Fuel Wood Project UPDATE

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

Sesbania Planting Reaches All-Time High!

Since June of 2006, the Kibale Community Fuel Wood Project has promoted *Sesbania sesban* as an excellent source of firewood. By growing this indigenous legume as a border around a farm, a family can greatly reduce their daily struggle for wood. Within six months of planting a seed, the tree can produce a considerable amount of wood. With crops of 1-200 capable around even the smallest farms, this fast-growing tree eases pressure on the natural forest.

Admittedly, members of the community did not adopt the notion of border planting immediately. However, with time and a little extra incentive, the number of people growing *Sesbania* borders in one of our pilot year areas has tripled. A competition was held to see who could grow the best trees while showing the community the most productive planting method. Two individuals did such remarkable jobs they were awarded with brand new bikes! (Thanks very much to the Arcus Foundation and the Columbus AAZK for funding these gifts.) At the award ceremony, the community was informed that the competition would be repeated in one year. We are confident that this extra encouragement will help protect Kibale and its wildlife.



Augustine Kanyamera standing with some of his award winning Sesbania.



Photo courtesy Mark Vibbert

Elephants Steal the Show

The elephants of Kibale are an elusive bunch. Dung and toppled trees abound, and it is a thrill for visitors to literally walk in the footprints of these amazing beings, but sightings are rare. One may be only meters away but invisible, due to undergrowth and dense foliage. Having seen chimpanzees scamper into the trees when confronted with a possible elephant encounter, a cautious attitude from humans could be considered the best bet.

Unfortunately, people living around Kibale do not always have the luxury of caution. For a month in late 2007, we heard elephants in villages within earshot of our forest home almost nightly. Screams and banging pots and pans would fill the night, trying to scare away the night raiders. Park authorities do promote a program of trench digging to keep elephants and pigs at bay, but the wildlife was in need of some good PR. Enter the KCFWP video show.

In March 2008, an elephant movie was shown to a crowd of 250 people at the Sebitoli Science Center. (continued on next page)

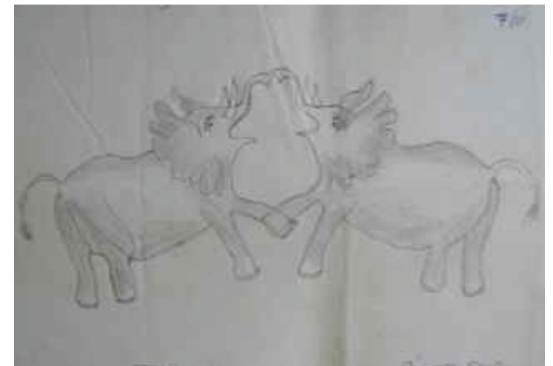
Elephants, Continued

The same movie was shown at all our other target areas, but Sebitoli, being the area most often affected by elephants, elicited a unique response. There were a few in the audience who chose to exclaim “destructive” or “ugly”. But, overwhelmingly, the response was one of admiration and awe. “Mahweh,” loosely translated as “WOW” is an expression often heard at the movie shows, but the elephants in Sebitoli brought it out more than ever. Due to the nocturnal nature of most raids, the majority of the villagers had never even seen the majesty of an elephant, only the destruction left in its path. Gasps escaped many lips during simple close-ups of an elephant’s hide. Cheers erupted during fights, play sessions and

mating. An empathetic silence struck the crowd during a scene showing the death of a calf. It is exactly this type of connection with nature the KCFWP is attempting to foster through video shows, and we have already seen evidence that learning about animals in such a fun way is further encouraging locals to seek out ways to live in harmony with nature. (More on page 4)



A crowd enjoys the video show. (photo courtesy Annie Musselman)



Drawing by Turyahebwa Gouda, Primary Five.

Taking Action Against Encroachers

Cutting down rainforests to make charcoal makes us mad. And guess what - it makes Ugandans mad too. Working together, the KCFWP, local citizens, and the Uganda Wildlife Authority have punished four poachers for their transgressions.

It started when the KCFWP asked a community to write or draw about their experiences with Kibale as part of the education campaign. Two people stated, quite plainly, that they had seen others entering the park, cutting trees, burning the wood, and then transporting the charcoal to sell in town. (Producing charcoal is one of the worst things for global warming: a tree that would otherwise be a carbon sink is killed and burnt. Much of the energy in the wood is wasted as it is converted to charcoal, a desirable

process only because of the ease of transporting charcoal rather than wood, and the high demand for fuel in town.)

The people who submitted these essays were angry and felt that nothing was being done. The project took their writing samples and submitted a report to the Chief Warden of Kibale. Putting our voice together with the community’s had a strong impact, and rangers were sent to investigate. Four individuals were caught burning wood, were arrested, and are currently awaiting trial. The Chief Warden asserted that with their limited manpower, the authorities may never have known about these activities. We are thankful to the community members who have taken a stand to protect their forest.



UWA rangers arresting a poacher. (photo courtesy UWA)

Staff Profile

Meet John Kabuleta Atwooki, age 51. He lives with his wife and ten children in Isunga Parish, bordering Kibale National Park. John is a KCFWP community liaison, and is also our Employee of the Season! For the past seven months John has worked tirelessly for the project, helping to build an average of 15 stoves each month while working only one day each week. (In May, his paid days were increased to accommodate the high demand for stoves.)



John hasn't always lived in Isunga. In fact, he was born and grew up in a village inside what is now the game corridor that links Kibale to Queen Elizabeth National Park to the South. In the 1980's, after living for more than 30 years inside corridor, John, his family, and the entire community were evicted from their homes. The government had decided to begin enforcing some long-neglected wildlife laws, protecting the safety of animals migrating between the two protected areas. John recalls it was a time of devastation for the community. Several homes were burned as the villagers were forcibly relocated.

For conservation, the move was a necessary evil, but for the humans involved it was an extremely difficult time. A famine occurred shortly after the move, making things even tougher. Though some families were offered compensation, many were not. Most people simply had to find

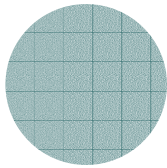
ways to cope with the situation. John had been a primary school teacher in his village, and was fortunate enough to be able to continue this career after relocation. He continued to work as a teacher for 23 more years.

It could be expected that some villagers would, in all fairness, harbor a continuing resentment toward the park. John does not. He now works to help protect it from the increasing human encroachment. He does this because, to him, Kibale forest has a value to the communities that surpasses the hardships it has unintentionally caused in the past. He sites employment opportunities as the number one benefit of the park, but also points to the rainfall produced by the forest and medicines that are still collected within its lush landscape. Although many people still want to use the park for illegal reasons, such as collecting poles and reeds for building materials, John thinks that once people are given greater sensitization about the park, they will be more than happy to help protect it. Thank you, John, for helping to bring this greater appreciation to your community.



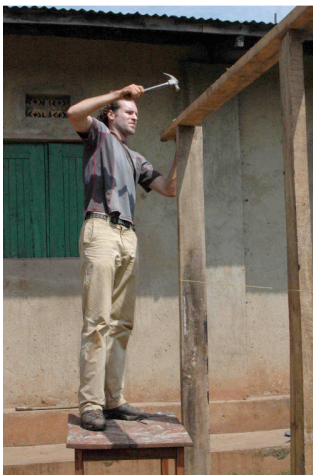
Community Liaison John Kabuleta counseling a woman about her seedbed. In the background is the game corridor linking Kibale with Queen Elizabeth NP, the former site of John's home village.

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
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 Johnson, Vermont
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More Photos and Info
 on the Website!

www.chimp-n-sea.org



Project volunteer Ronan Donovan building the new library at the Isunga demonstration area.

Some Comments on the Video Show

For me, an elephant makes me feel happy when I see it on the cinema. An elephant playing with another, an elephant giving birth, and an elephant running after each other. Really for me, when I see those plays, they keep on making me so happy. I really say I would stop all those people who keep on killing them for nothing.

Otafire Daniel

*What I learned from the film is that there is a very close relationship between us and the chimpanzee. We should be kind to hem by not harming them. No trapping them, no spearing them. We should also plant our own trees for firewood and building purposes other than depending on the national park. For the park is the only habitat for chimpanzees.**

Nkamusiima Daniel

To me, when I came to the show I saw a film about the penguin. I was very happy and I learnt so many things and this was from the good vision of your fruitful wildlife. I have gone to emphasize to my fellows that they should also put in a hand and support wildlife.

Asabahebwa Van Edson

*The gorillas young ones they like playing like children but for them, they play in the tree. When the gorilla got pregnant, it eats flowers of bamboo trees. That implies it gets appetite when pregnant. Like a human being when they are pregnant gets an appetite to eat.**

Bagonza, Julius

**Thanks to the Great Apes Film Initiative for providing the ape films.*

Books and Volunteers Needed

In our last update, we made a request for books, posters or other educational materials for the science centers. Unfortunately, no one sent anything in.

That's ok, we know you all are busy people. This time, though, we really need you! One of the existing demonstration areas will begin hosting a small library soon, and a third new science center will be opening up in the fall. The books currently at the two science centers aren't enough to go around. We'd be thrilled if you mailed us useful things you might find during spring-cleaning, and they will join us on our next trip.

Please mail books, posters or wildlife calendars to:

**412 Rockland Avenue
 Merion PA 19066.**

The KCFWP is also looking for volunteers to come and spend a month or more living in this amazing rainforest and helping to achieve the project's long-term goals. It will truly be a life changing experience! Check out the website, or email kibalewood@yahoo.com for more information.

Wishing you all the best from
 Kibale -
 Becka & Michael

Thank You!

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

A star notes donors who helped both pilot and expansion phases



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Thank you all very much!

To make a donation, please write a check to “Chimp-n-Sea Wildlife Conservation Fund”

Mail to: 480 Hogback Road

Johnson, Vermont 05656

Please write “Kibale” on your check’s memo line. You can also donate on-line via paypal,
 at **www.chimp-n-sea.org**.

Chimp-n-Sea is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible.