



## NVT Event, 6 November 2019

Please save the evening of Wednesday 6 November for this year's NVT event at the Union Jack Club, near Waterloo, London.

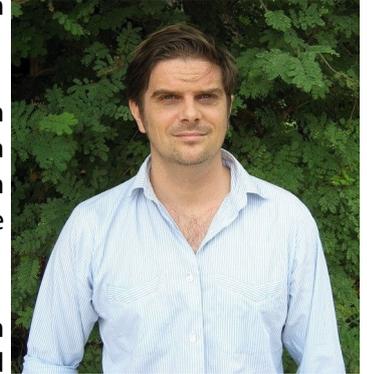
For the past three years, The Lilongwe Wildlife Trust has managed our conservation programme on the ground in Malawi, to which we contribute funding. Johnny Vaughan, a director of LWT, will tell us the stories behind the work of the education programme in the schools and communities in the Nyika and Vwaza areas and about the many people who help make the programme a success.

LWT is a fascinating organisation, having started as a wildlife sanctuary in 2008, then expanding into conservation, animal rescue, wildlife crime prevention, education and research. It works throughout Malawi and cross-border, employing 90 staff. LWT responds to the emerging conservation challenges by focusing on where they believe they can deliver the greatest impact.

We will tell you more in our September newsletter.

Do come. As well as hearing an inspiring talk, the event will be an opportunity for you to network with old and new friends who share an interest in Malawi.

*Details of the event can be found at [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/UJC-2019.html](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/UJC-2019.html). Tickets for the evening (£16, students £8) are available from Peter Lawrance: e-mail: [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com). Address: 50 Brewery Road, Horsell, Woking, GU21 4NA. Alternatively, please complete the application form included with this newsletter.*



Johnny Vaughan  
© J Vaughan

## News Update

### Conservation Education Programme.

The Lilongwe Wildlife Trust regularly sends reports on our conservation education programme, with impressive statistics of activities with school children, educators, influencers and magistrates. Statistics only tell us one side of the story and it is important to know if attitudes and behaviours are changing. How is the programme affecting the individuals who live around the Nyika Plateau and Vwaza Marsh?

Mr Chikoya Mkandawire was trained as a wildlife patron for Chakhalamu Primary School. He clearly took the subject to heart as he went on to establish a second wildlife club at Kankhoka Primary School following his relocation. He is now the patron for Mwazisi Primary School as well as the coordinator for the cluster of wildlife clubs in the Mwazisi

area. Mr Mkandawire, and people like him, have a great positive influence on others.

Teachers report that they are no longer approached to buy bush meat. Tradition and lack of awareness had made them a ready target for the trade. Now that the conservation education programme has given them a better understanding of the consequences of the bush meat market, traders will not approach them for fear of being arrested.

Sharing is a great way to embed knowledge so, in November 2018, 22 student representatives from wildlife clubs met at a 'seed camp' at Chelinda. The two-day event was designed to share best practice, ideas and skills and focused on three themes: wildlife and culture, the role of

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## News Update continued

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youth in wildlife conservation, and youth leadership development. The children found this really motivating, not only because they exchanged ideas but because they were able to see the wildlife on the plateau. "In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught" – a quote from Baba Dioum, a Senegalese environmentalist.



*Mzimba school educational trip to Nyika © LWT*

The conservation education programme funded by NVT UK, has just completed its third year. Trustee, Jonathan Timberlake will be visiting Malawi later in 2019 to discuss what has been achieved to date and the hopes and challenges for the next three years (Phase 2) of the work.



*Lupalamizi primary implementing bee keeping project © LWT*

The activity to conserve Malawi's valuable wildlife – animals and plants – has stepped up a gear. It started when the Malawi government changed its wildlife legislation so that people caught poaching are subject to long jail sentences, with no option of a fine. Word has spread through the communities and this tough approach is having the required effect in reducing poaching numbers. The next stage is to ensure those convicted benefit from education while in prison so that they have learned skills that will allow them to earn a living from something less devastating than poaching. NVT has agreed to help fund the first year of this initiative. The Peace Parks Foundation has a field co-ordinator for the Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier

Conservation Area (TFCA), and is involved in a significant programme designed to reduce all forms of poaching in cooperation with German bank KfW. It is hoped that all these combined efforts will make a marked difference.

### **We can't do it without you!**

The programme is working. As we go into Phase 2 we will need significant regular investment to ensure we make a lasting positive impact on the conservation of the Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh. We are very grateful to all of you who have already donated towards our programmes and hope that this newsletter will encourage others of you to support this important programme. Please use the donation form at the end of this newsletter, or donate online at [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org).

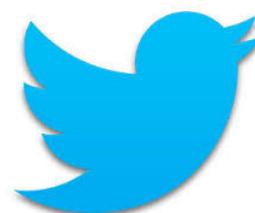
Thank you for your support.

### **NVT is now on Twitter!**

Trustee Jonny Hanson has set up a Twitter account for the Nyika-Vwaza Trust, enabling it to communicate its message to, and engage more effectively with, a range of stakeholders in Malawian and African conservation practice and research. Through using Twitter we aim to:

- Relay organisational information and complement the website's existing store of information and material.
- Share relevant information from similar and/or partner organisations and individuals.
- Advertise NVT events, principally our annual lecture evening.
- Advertise NVT research grants.
- Publicise findings from research grants and project news.
- Showcase relevant images from Nyika, Vwaza and our work there.

Follow us on Twitter @NyikaVwazaTrust to stay up-to-date, and don't forget to 'like' and 'retweet' NVT tweets!



## News from Chelinda

CAWS report the exciting experience of the first lion sighting in decades, spotted atop the plateau in December. Let's hope we hear more of this one.

It's been the rainy season which means that the roads have been challenging but worth the effort in a high-clearance 4x4 just to see the vibrant hues of the grassland and the countless colourful orchids and wildflowers. The rains also bring many wildlife species to areas close to Chelinda Camp and Lodge, with herds of eland, zebra, reedbuck, bushbuck and roan frequently spotted by a healthy number of visitors to the Nyika Plateau. The wet season is also ideal for birding and sightings included harriers, falcons, buzzards, yellow billed ducks and more.

Visitors in January enjoyed a close-up sighting of a large male hyena crossing the road leading to the old army tower during a game drive and a leopard crossed the road towards the eastern side during an evening drive. December brought two fantastic leopard sightings, one of which was in close proximity to the campsite. The other was atop a tree, where an adult male was enjoying a fresh kill, while three hyenas on the ground watched with anticipation.



Leopard © Bentley Palmer

CAWS have launched the Sangwala Trail - an all new three-day fully-catered trek that spans across 43kms of lush montane grasslands and woodlands. With mountain biking becoming an increasingly popular favourite, they also recently added a new collection of Schwinn bikes for camp and lodge guests.

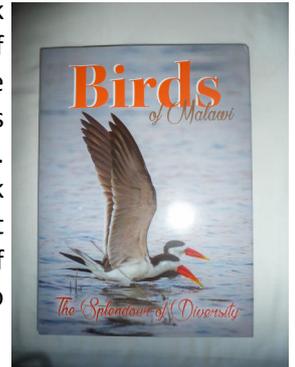


Side striped jackal © Dana Allen

## Birds of Malawi. The Splendour of Diversity By Bentley Palmer and John Wilson

Review by Mike Kettlewell

This is a beautifully produced book about many of the gorgeous birds of Malawi. Perhaps it is best to dispose of what it is not. It isn't a twitcher's guide to be taken on ulendo (safari). There is happily no index. It is a book very much to be savoured in quiet moments, accompanied by a glass of something long and refreshing, to appreciate fully what is on offer.



The book's front cover  
© Bentley Palmer

Bentley Palmer's photography magically captures the essence and character of the birds, like the Lesser Black winged Plover scurrying after ground insects or the grumpy Ground Hornbill striding aggressively in search of small hapless mammals, reptiles and insects. Oxpeckers hitching a lift nestled into the hair of a warthog or the startled Crested Barbet wondering what life was all about.

The photos have been taken mostly in Malawi's very special and important national reserves and grouped by habitat within each, with an opening page wonderfully illustrating that habitat. The photos are selected to show both the common and the endangered, yet iconic, species that still inhabit these reserves, though less frequently away from protection. About 200 species of the 600, or so, that have been recorded in Malawi are illustrated. They are however all integral to these beautiful places.

John Wilson's text is authoritative and informative with some Chewa and Yao onomatopoeic names derived from their sounds or habits. The rare and endangered White Winged Apilis has a foothold in John's Zomba 'jungle' garden tailored to this lovely little bird.



White Winged Apilis female feeding nest  
© Bentley Palmer

It is clear from the text that too many species, like the Apilis, are endangered from loss of habitat. An important and clear message from this book is that Malawi could lose many of its birds, and be the poorer for it, unless the marvellous and varied geography of the country is cherished and nurtured. The National Reserves are becoming oases that could repopulate the wider countryside with sympa-

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thetic farming and some reforestation. A lesson can be learned from the dramatic loss of farmland specialist birds caused by the UK's industrial agriculture methods. Too often we learn the consequences of our actions too late and species are lost for ever. This book reminds us that now is the time to protect what is still there.



*Blue Cheeked Bee-Eater flight*  
© Bentley Palmer

I can catalogue a dozen, or so, bird species that regularly visit my garden in Oxfordshire. In 1962 my aunt visited our Zomba house for 3 weeks and recorded, in the flyleaf of our Roberts Birds of South Africa (1942), 31 species in the garden, and that was by no means exhaustive. Such ready richness is so precious it must not be lost. This gorgeous book must be a regular reminder of the importance and beauty of birds, the litmus test of a healthy ecosystem. A copy should be in every hotel, lodge, departmental office and secondary school not to mention the drawing rooms of all interested in the birds of Africa and Malawi in particular. The survival of mankind depends upon maintaining a rich ecosphere and at present Homo sapiens looks like causing a global mass extinction to match the demise of the Dinosaurs.

## Update on research grant projects

We are delighted that Julia Van Velden and Heejoo Lee, who received research grants in 2018, are progressing their projects with enthusiasm.

Julia from Griffith University, Brisbane is working on a study of the bush meat trade in Nyika, Vwaza and Nkhotakota, with the aims of investigating how hunting is currently managed and controlled by area managers in protected areas and by NGO programmes; providing data about the socio-economic drivers for the local communities; and exploring



*Research enumerator and villager*  
© J van Velden

community and individual responses to interventions. She reports that the fieldwork was completed in September 2018. She has now returned to Australia to analyse the data and write her report. She spoke to 540 households, visiting 23 villages in Nyika and Vwaza before moving on to Majete National Park and her plan is to return to Malawi this September for a feedback and workshop session with local stakeholders. She has sent us an interim report and the full study will be submitted by the end of 2019, accompanied by the scientific publications produced. Keep up with her work on her blog post:

<https://malawibushmeat.wordpress.com/2019/02/01/malawi-fieldwork-a-photo-essay/>



*A view of Vwaza Marsh © J van Velden*

Heejoo Lee is studying the drivers and social implications of Chikanda (orchid tuber) collection and trade. Her aim is to create a better understanding of the economics of the trade for the various participators:

- The risks v return experienced by both collectors and traders when participating in a livelihood that is illicit.
- Profile of the supply chain, especially between Malawi and Zambia.
- Estimated value and volume of the trade.
- Mapping of the geographic extent and intensity of harvesting.

The survey is intended as an initial phase of information to feed into a plan for intervention that will reduce the threat of orchid poaching by supporting the communities to create alternative sustainable livelihoods.

Heejoo made her first visit to Nyika in February 2019, submitted an interim report and now plans a follow-up visit in June. She explains how important it has been to build trust with the communities, whether those accessing Nyika orchids directly, or accessing the plants through the labour of Nyika communities. It is encouraging that many of those interviewed told her they would like support to focus on other means of income generation, such as soya or groundnut farming. Others knew of 'certain areas' that would be ideal for sustainable harvest and cultivation, but it

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is not yet clear if these are within or outside the national park.



Women working on questionnaire © Heejoo Lee

Three further research reports will become available in the next few months:

- Investigating distribution, abundance and propagation techniques of the wild edible orchid species in the Nyika National Park. Study by Maganizo Namoto, Mzuzu University (who is in touch with Heejoo Lee).
- Compilation of a plant checklist for Vwaza Marsh, based on new fieldwork. Study by Sopani Sichinga, TFCA Project Assistant.
- Mapping and remote detection of bracken fern invasion on the Nyika Plateau, Part 2. Study by Andrew Kanzunguze, Mzuzu University.

We will highlight the major findings from these reports in our autumn newsletter.

A further grant was agreed in January, for Paston Simkoko to establish base line data and the current conservation status of the tree *Prunus Africana* (Red stinkwood), the bark of which is often used medicinally and traded internationally. The fieldwork will take place in the moist forests on the Nyika plateau and another N Malawi forest to look at population structure and regeneration capacity.

These research studies are important if we are to amass information that will guide management in making key decisions that have a positive impact on the Nyika and Vwaza ecosystems' future. NVT UK is keen to encourage and support research on subjects such as:

- Fire management, especially in Nyika National Park.
- Exotic species control in both Nyika and the Vwaza Marsh
- Bird population and endangered bird species
- Studies into the impact of orchid poaching on the Nyika Plateau.

We want to encourage Malawians to take responsibility for protecting the wealth of their inherited ecosystems and we are also pleased to see interest in Malawi from Universities in other parts of the world.

### Jamie McCallum's talk

Jamie's talk on 23 October 2018 got the audience's attention with some interesting new information – at least, new to us. He is a director of Peace Parks Foundation, an organisation renowned for its conservation and anti-poaching work and now active in Malawi

Applying new thinking in different contexts is natural to Jamie who started his career in Formula 1 racing. He heard Dr John Hanks, a founding director of PPF talk about a 'new type of conservating' and was hooked. He learned that the biological system had been severed along political lines rather than ecological ones so it simply didn't make sense for animals. PPF worked with the Transfrontier Conservation Area to open up migration routes rather than fence in the animals. If you get countries to share natural resource and manage it together you get conservation at a scale that leads to peace and stability.

And here was one surprise – the extent to which advanced technology can be a solution. Radar surveillance systems can locate activity up to 10 kms away and cameras then zoom in to show what is actually happening. This means that anti-poaching teams know exactly where to locate the poachers. The technology is costly but delivers a satisfying result – and it works in the dark.

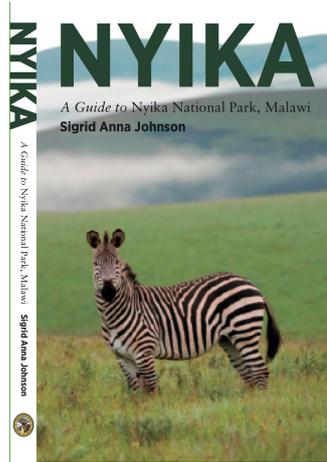
He told us that building infrastructure is critical - roads, bridges and accommodation. Translocation is also important in order to avoid over population and areas being denuded through over-grazing.

It works if you help people produce plants and rear animals for their own use and to sell the surplus for much-needed income. To have any real effect on the illegal market for poached products, you need to catch the people high up the chain, who might control 70 to 200 poachers. Jamie also said how important it is to give governments the credit when things go well and there are now pockets of success.

He ended with a statement from Nelson Mandela: "I know of no political movement, no philosophy, no ideology, which does not agree with Peace Parks concept....It is a concept that can be embraced by all."

## Give a Nyika Guide to a friend

What better way to remind your friends of the stunning scenery, flora, fauna of the Nyika plateau than to give them a copy of the Guide to Nyika National Park. And, if they've never been there, give them a copy to persuade them to visit. It's a magical place of natural importance, so we should get the guide into as many hands as possible. Order on the form attached to this newsletter or contact the Hon Secretary, Peter Lawrance, on [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com) or by post to Peter Lawrance, 50 Brewery Road, Woking GU21 4NA.



The Nyika Guide  
© Sigi Johnson

## Cyclone Idai

The devastating cyclone that recently hit Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi is much in our minds and we have every sympathy for those that have been affected. Our understanding is that it is the southern part of Malawi that has been hit, with flooding around the Shire River - not unusual in the rainy season. The Lilongwe Wildlife Centre does not seem to have been affected and nor have the Nyika and Vwaza areas in the north.



Domwe viewpoint © Jerry Kent



*Gloriosa superba* © Sigi Johnson



*Dolichos* © Sigi Johnson



Late wet season. Lush greengrassland © Sarah Kettlewell

Editor: Jennie Kettlewell  
Designer: Mike Budgen

## Order Form for Guide to Nyika National Park

To order "Nyika – A Guide to the Nyika National Park, Malawi", payment can be made by £sterling cheque (made out to Nyika-Vwaza Trust), via Paypal, or direct to NVT's UK bank – see details below.

Prices:

**UK:** £20, incl. p&p, or £21 via Paypal

**Overseas:** (direct to TSB account or by bankers draft) £28, including p&p, or £30 via Paypal.

We rely on donations to the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust to fund our programmes, so please consider adding a donation to the amount you are paying for the guide.

***Please complete the following:***

I would like ..... copies of the book, "Nyika – A Guide to the Nyika National Park, Malawi."

I would like to add a donation of £.....

I enclose my cheque for £.....

Or, I confirm that I have paid £.... direct to the

Trust account at TSB, sort code 30-90-15, account number 01192885,

Or that I have paid £....sterling by bankers draft,

Or that I have paid £....by Paypal.

Please use your last name as the reference.

Cheques must be in £sterling and drawn on a UK bank.

Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other.....

Forename:.....

Surname:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

..... Postcode:.....

Email address:.....

Please return this completed form to:

**Hon. Treasurer, Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust**

**50 Brewery Road**

**Woking, Surrey, GU21 4NA, UK**



**The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust**  
Reg. charity no. 1105105

The Hon. Treasurer/Secretary  
50 Brewery Road,  
Woking,  
Surrey.  
GU21 4NA  
Tel: +44 (0)1483 714130  
Email: sec.nvt@gmail.com

*Working for environmental and wildlife conservation in  
northern Malawi.*

Email: info@nyika-vwaza-trust.org  
Website: www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org

## BANKER'S ORDER

*(for UK residents only)*

To: ..... Bank plc.  
.....  
.....  
.....

(Please insert the name and address of your Bank in the space above)

Please pay to TSB Bank plc, 40 High Street, Alton, Hants, GU34 IBQ (Sort Code 30-90-15), for the credit of The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust's Account No. 01192885, the sum of :-

£ ..... on .....

(Please insert date above)

and thereafter every month/quarter/six months/year (*delete as appropriate*) until cancelled by me in writing.

Name of Account to be debited .....

Account Number .....

Signature .....

Date .....

Please return this completed form to:-

Hon. Treasurer,  
Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust,  
50 Brewery Road,  
Woking,  
Surrey.  
GU21 4NA

for registration and onward transmission to your Bank.

## Friends of the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust Donation Form

PLEASE PRINT YOUR DETAILS IN CAPITALS

Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Forenames: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a donation of:

Or: I have completed the Banker's Order Form.

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made

In the past four years  Today  In the future

*(Please tick boxes you wish to apply)*

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

I undertake to inform the charity if I wish to cancel this declaration, change my name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on my income and/or capital gains.

Signature:

Date:

Please return this completed form to:- Hon. Treasurer,  
Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust, 50 Brewery Road, Woking,  
Surrey. GU21 4NA.

## The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust

**Promotional Evening with a talk by Johnny Vaughan  
at the Union Jack Club,  
Sandell Street, London, SE1 8UJ on Wednesday 6th November 2019.**

### “The work of the education programme”

#### Application Form for Tickets

Admission tickets are £16 per person or £8 per student. They will be issued from end-September 2019.

I hereby apply for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for the people named below.

I enclose my cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the ‘Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust.’

Alternatively you may email this application form to the Hon.Secretary, NVT (UK) Trust, [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com) and make payment direct to the Trust’s account at TSB, sort code 30-90-15, account number 01192885 or use the Paypal button “Donate Now” on the website, but please note the ticket using PayPal is £17 per person to cover additional fees.

**(Please complete in block letters)**

Name of Applicant:		Ticket No:
Organisation Name: <small>(if applicable)</small>		Date Issued:
Address:		
Contact Tel. No:		
Email Address:		

Name:		Ticket No:

Names of other people for whom tickets are requested:

Please return this form, with your remittance, a.s.a.p.to Peter Lawrance, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, NV(UK)T, The Malt House, 50 Brewery Road, Horsell, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4NA.

