



## NVT Event, Tuesday 15 November 2022

### "Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; what is it and who is it for?"

**The Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1 8UJ (near Waterloo station),  
or on Zoom**

Our speaker will be Dr Leejiah Dorward, a conservation scientist from the University of Bangor, Wales, with a Master's degree in conservation science and a Doctorate on improving understanding of the socio-ecological complexity of human-carnivore interactions. Conservation is changing, as we learned from our 2021 speaker, Jonathan Timberlake, but how it is changing is a much-debated topic. Leejiah is very well qualified to add to the debate with his talk: "Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; what is it and who is it for?" The talk will draw on Leejiah's experiences around the world, as well as in Northern Malawi. Of particular interest will be his views on the role of learning outside the classroom and the value of education in policing wildlife crime. He will show us footage that brings the stories to life. It promises to be very interesting.



Dr. Leejiah Dorward  
© Dr. Leejiah Dorward

This is the first time we have run a hybrid event for our autumn talk. Attend in person and you will have the opportunity to meet old friends and new, with a shared interest in Malawi. If you prefer not to travel to London, you can join in on Zoom. Please let us know if you wish to opt for on-line, so we can send you the link. This will allow our many friends in Malawi, and elsewhere, to join us.

**Don't miss it. Make sure it's in your diary and you have booked your tickets, whether in person or for the on-line talk.**

#### **At the Union Jack Club:**

6.00pm doors open, Gascoigne Room. Networking, sale of merchandise and cash bar  
6.45pm update from Chairman, Tom Lupton  
7.00pm Leejiah Dorward's talk, followed by questions from the audience  
8.00pm networking continues. Cash bar  
9.30pm evening ends.

On Zoom: the talk starts at 6.45pm

*Details of the event can be found at [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/UJC-2022.html](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/UJC-2022.html). Tickets for the evening at the Union Jack Club (£16, students £8), are available from Peter Lawrance:*

*e-mail: [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com). Address: 50 Brewery Road, Woking, GU21 4NA. Alternatively, please complete the application form included with this newsletter.*

If you prefer to join by Zoom, we suggest you make a suitable donation.

*Payment for tickets and donations may be made direct to the Trust account at Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-90-89, account number 44504860, (IBAN GB94LOYD30908944504860); account name The Nyika-Vwaza UK Trust, or by a UK cheque payable to Nyika Vwaza Trust and posted to the Hon. Treasurer at 50 Brewery Road, Woking, GU21 4NA.*

#### Union Jack Club, directions and facilities:

The Union Jack Club is in Sandell St, directly opposite the Waterloo Station ticket hall for the Jubilee underground line. Cross Waterloo Rd at the traffic lights and Sandell St is 10m to your left. The club entrance is 15m down Sandell St on the right. Depending on availability, you can book a table in the restaurant (open 17.00 -21.30) or accommodation for the night. For the restaurant, ring 020 7902 6062 and for accommodation ring 020 7928 4814. Both can be booked on-line: [www.ujclub.co.uk](http://www.ujclub.co.uk)

## Building Environmental Stewardship in Communities around Malawi's Protected Areas

By Clement Manjaalera, Head of Education, Lilongwe Wildlife Trust

Since 2015, Lilongwe Wildlife Trust (LWT) and the Nyika-Vwaza Trust (NVT) have partnered on an ambitious programme to deliver environmental education (EE) in communities around Malawi's protected areas in the north of the country. Environmental degradation – through deforestation, illegal wildlife trade, encroachment and pollution - is stripping Malawi of its economic, social and ecological potential at an alarming rate, threatening both natural resources and human development. Encouraging citizens, and particularly the next generation, to feel a sense of pride and responsibility for the environment is therefore critical to stemming this cycle of decline. That is the premise of our EE programme, and we are delighted to have received generous funding from NVT to achieve this over the last six years.



Wildlife club at Secondary school Pachichi  
© David Billings

Thanks to NVT's support, we have:

- Engaged 14,061 children across 58 schools in EE
- Trained 320 teachers on lesson delivery, module content, wildlife management and monitoring of conservation activities
- Sensitised and trained 1,570 community members on human-wildlife conflict and collaborative management; and on conservation activities such as tree planting, fire management, and wildlife and forestry legislation
- Trained 215 law enforcement officers on bushmeat-related practices and law enforcement
- Supported communities to plant 14,380 trees (80% survival rate).

The programme has provided important opportunities for learners to become engaged in real world issues that transcend classroom walls. We believe it has achieved a

positive shift in attitudes and behaviours in communities, evidenced through the implementation of self-driven conservation initiatives, such as visits to protected areas, tree planting, beekeeping, community clean ups and the establishment of orchards, vegetable gardens and permaculture gardens. We have also been encouraged that the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) has reported an increase in the seizure of snares and firearms, a reduction in the poaching of wild animals for bushmeat and an increase in arrests for wildlife offences, although poaching is still a challenge in Nyika National Park. Increased awareness of environmental issues has also resulted in community members passing on intelligence about poaching and illegal tree cutting to law enforcement that subsequently lead to arrests. Some community members have also voluntarily surrendered firearms to the authorities after attending community sensitisation meetings.

### Key learnings

A key learning during our programme has been about the power of peer-to-peer learning and role modelling. We have seen that conservation initiatives undertaken by one community and/or school often encourage others to follow suit. For example, after working with communities in Rumphi we received interest from other communities in Mzimba and Chitipa and subsequently delivered training to these groups (in collaboration with DNPW and the Department of Forestry) in afforestation, vegetable gardens and community rallies.

Another learning has been to embrace unconventional approaches to education. We took our environmental education programme to inmates at Rumphi Prison to try and spread awareness among new audiences. After joining our teacher training sessions, prison wardens delivered our curriculum to 58 inmates, 50% of whom were serving sentences for wildlife offences (the programme targeted wildlife offenders but was open to anyone with an interest in conservation). As a result, two former inmates began supporting our wider outreach work by sharing their personal stories with the media and warning communities of the legal penalties for engaging in wildlife crime.

We are hugely grateful to NVT for supporting our work in the north of Malawi and helping us to showcase and consolidate evidence on the impact of EE. Thanks to further funding from NVT we are now incorporating our EE content into the national primary school curriculum, an intervention that will deliver even greater impact across the country.

### Note:

*The six-year programme of working with the communities in the Nyika and Vwaza areas has achieved an unexpected and hugely beneficial legacy. The principles behind the Environmental Education programme described above are now being written into the Malawi national school curriculum and progress is outlined in the following article.*

## Mainstreaming Environmental Education into the national primary curriculum for Malawi

A brief progress report by Dorothy Tembo Nhlema, Programme Manager, LWT

Over the past five months, the project has made significant progress and has produced a draft source book called “Wildlife and Environment Source for Teachers”. LWT conducted project kick-off meetings with the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) and Department of Quality Assurance and Services (DQAS) in the Ministry of Education. In addition, a curriculum audit was conducted, which revealed among other things that wildlife conservation, wildlife crime, wildlife welfare, waste management, human and wildlife conflict, were either never or inadequately covered. Therefore, to inspire future generations, the Source Book core team have drafted a content with eight themes, namely: environment and biodiversity; wildlife conservation and welfare; human–wildlife conflict; wildlife and forestry crime; forests and people; energy resources; water management and waste management. All these themes were referenced to Environmental Education modules developed by LWT for use in lesson delivery in the PEEP programme.



LWT and MIE  
© LWT

Once illustrations are completed by MIE, the draft module will be refined ready for piloting. There is overwhelming support from the Ministry of Education and stakeholders on this initiative, which is timely because of the plans that the Government of Malawi have to review the National Curriculum, and also because the country is facing indescribable environmental degradation.



MIE and Chief Education Officer  
© LWT

## Three research studies added to pool of information

It is good news that three of the research projects we wrote about in our March newsletter have since been completed and are up on our website. See the links provided below.

**Fire occurrence patterns.** Lumbani Benedicto Banda, from the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, has completed his study to measure fire occurrence patterns on the Nyika Plateau and to establish if there was any association between fire and the spread of bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). He used Landsat satellite images for the years 2013 – 2021, with an example of pre-fire images in May and post-fire images in September for each of the years. Vegetation was sampled from unburnt areas as well as low and high fire frequency areas.



Lumbani and  
research assistants  
© Lumbani Banda

Over the past decades, prescribed burning has been used as a management technique to enhance grass forage quality and to protect evergreen forest patches. In addition, poachers sometimes set fires to attract targeted animals to more succulent regenerating growth.

Results showed that between 72% and 88% of the Nyika National Park experienced fires annually between 2013 and 2021. Species diversity was significantly higher in areas of low fire frequency, compared to unburnt and high fire frequency areas. In addition, areas of high fire frequency resulted in a significantly higher abundance of bracken fern and Lumbani concluded that the results suggest that high fire frequency is associated with the spread of bracken. The species is able to survive fire due to its extensive network of underground rhizomes.

The conclusions may be clear, but there is still much discussion to be had about how and if a change in the managed fire regime will be used to control the effect of bracken fern outcompeting other vegetation.

Lumbani told us. “When I visited Nyika I was surprised to see the extent to which bracken is colonizing grasslands.



When one reads in the research reports about this species, it is not easy to imagine and comprehend how dangerous the species can be, but a visit on the Nyika just revealed a different picture than I had. I was pleased with the support the staff at Nyika gave me, they made my research stay on the plateau comfortable. Moreover when I had questions regarding different aspects of management related to bracken they were more than willing to provide answers. I enjoyed working on the Nyika firstly because of the beautiful landscapes which seem to energize you every day. The grasslands have a way of making you happy whenever you are tired with the field work; viewing zebras and roan antelopes on my way back from the field also made me happy.”



Species survey  
© Lumbani Banda

See full report here: [https://nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Banda\\_Nyika-fires\\_NVT-Report-Aug-2022.pdf](https://nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Banda_Nyika-fires_NVT-Report-Aug-2022.pdf)

***Lantana camara* at the Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve.** Eric Gowero, from the Department of Biological Sciences, Mzuzu University, set out to establish if *Lantana camara*, one of the top 10 invasive plants listed by the IUCN, was a potential threat in the area. He carried out surveys in October 2021 and March 2022, covering 5% of the reserve.



Construction of plots  
© Eric Gowero

Results showed that *Lantana* occupies only 16.5 ha, or less than 0.02% of the entire area. It had been expected that the plant would have been found around the 19 old villages, but was only found in one, Chalepweteka. The indication is that *Lantana camara* is not invasive in the reserve at present and the recommendation is that the species should be eradicated as and when it is found, to prevent the situation getting worse. The study also recommends further investigation on

the ecological factors that have suppressed the invasion of *Lantana* since its introduction inside the protected area.

See full report here: [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Gowero\\_Lantana-in-Vwaza\\_NVT-Report-Apr-2022.pdf](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Gowero_Lantana-in-Vwaza_NVT-Report-Apr-2022.pdf)



Lantana being used as a fence  
© Eric Gowero

**Status of *Juniperus procera* in Nyika National Park.** Andrew Kanzunguze’s objective was to determine the structure and condition of the Juniper forest and to map the distribution of Juniper trees beyond the current forest boundary. *Juniperus procera* (African pencil cedar), often reaching up to 35m in height, is an Afrotropical conifer distributed in tropical regions of Africa. There had been concern that illegal felling/logging, together with the low rate of natural regeneration, was causing a decline in the Juniper population. In the study, the trees were found to be randomly distributed along streams, and forest patches at the mouths of the valleys beyond the main forest, occurring both as individual trees and clusters of up to 40 trees. The survey concluded that the fire management programme has worked in favour of the species population in the Nyika National Park. In the light of the common occurrence of fires in the Nyika, and the susceptibility of the tree to fire, it was recommended that the fire programme be continued and intensified. This information will inform the DNPW fire management programme, thus encouraging seedling regeneration. The study notes that juniper logs were used in the construction of the chalets at Chelinda. See full report here:

[www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Kanzunguze\\_Juniperus-on-Nyika\\_NVT-Report-Apr-2022.pdf](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/Kanzunguze_Juniperus-on-Nyika_NVT-Report-Apr-2022.pdf)



Solitary juniper on high rock © Andrew Kanzunguze

All completed research studies can be found on our website [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/research/research-grants/](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org/research/research-grants/)

## More research in the pipeline

In addition to the completed research reports, there are two studies currently in progress and one more just starting.

**George Malembo M'Manga's study of honey guides and honey hunters** in Northern Malawi is now under way. He comments: "Field work has started with a pilot survey around the study area. I have also managed to collect data around Nthalire. I am excited to find that there are active honey hunters around Nyika and Vwaza. The greater honeyguide is well known among the people, and many honey-hunters cooperate with it to find wild bees' nests. I am also happy to discover that the dominant cultural groups (tribes) around Vwaza and Nyika are Tumbukas and Ngondes and they honey hunt. It is not easy to get to where honey hunters are found, especially around Nyika, since they are at the very boundary of the reserve, not easily accessible with a vehicle, and a very long distance from one respondent to another, therefore costly beyond expectation. I am looking forward to joining them during honey hunting trips."



George left with colleague from Nthalire  
© George M'Manga

**Olivia Sievert's study of elephant pathways and dung** aims to investigate human-wildlife conflict around Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. She told us: "We are now analysing our crop foraging data collected in 2021 and comparing it to our 2018 results."



Collaring an elephant  
© Olivia Sievert

In 2021 the focus of our sample collection was around the southern boundary of Vwaza, compared to 2018, which had a

wider spread throughout the reserve. This may be part of the reason we found a much higher proportion of crops within the dung samples collected in 2021. It is important to note, however, that certain crops, such as sweet potato, which were reported as fed on by elephants, would not be easily found within dung samples. This is therefore still an under-representation of the crops foraged on around Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. However, this can be quickly remedied by the erection of a fence, which is currently being built. More importantly, it is also clear that hippos spend a large amount of time within the communities. We are looking to continue our dung analysis work long-term to determine the changes in diet in response to fencing the southern boundary of the reserve. We also recently fitted an additional two satellite collars to elephants. Early data suggests these individuals are staying within the confines of the reserve, which is hopefully in response to the fencing that was installed over the last year."

**Erik Sandvig and Leejiah Dorward's study to estimate the abundance of Denham's Bustard on the Nyika Plateau** is starting this September and we will no doubt hear an update at our event on 15 November, when it will be nearing completion.

It is possible that one additional grant will be given from the latest round of grant applications (2022 round 2).

## LWT's Clement Manjaalera celebrated as 'Conservation hero'

Clement joined Lilongwe Wildlife Trust as a volunteer tour guide in 2008. Now LWT's Head of Education, he told his story to Tusk's annual publication.

"I started caring for the environment when I was very young, as I spent most of my time in the bush after classes. I even used to do my homework there rather than going to the library! I joined LWT as a volunteer tour guide and was trained in environmental education. Since then I have gone on to lead the Trust's education programme, working with school groups and communities, sharing my conservation knowledge and inspiring them to be part of the solution. When I started working in conservation, there were many organisations working on environmental issues. They had great knowledge about the issues but didn't always understand how to engage with children and inspire them to change their mindsets. We now know that one way to inspire children is to give them role models and mentors. My team always talk about our own journeys in conservation."



## Donations for new National Curriculum programme appreciated

You will have seen in this newsletter that encouraging progress is being made with adapting teaching materials from LWT's Environmental Education programme, for use as source book content now that conservation is to be included in the schools' national curriculum. Funds are much needed for our support of this initiative and for the research projects which will inform future management of the Nyika and Vwaza reserves. We can't do this without you. We are most grateful to all of you who have already made donations and hope that this newsletter will encourage others to support this important work. You can find a donation form at the end of this newsletter. Or donate online at [www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org](http://www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org).

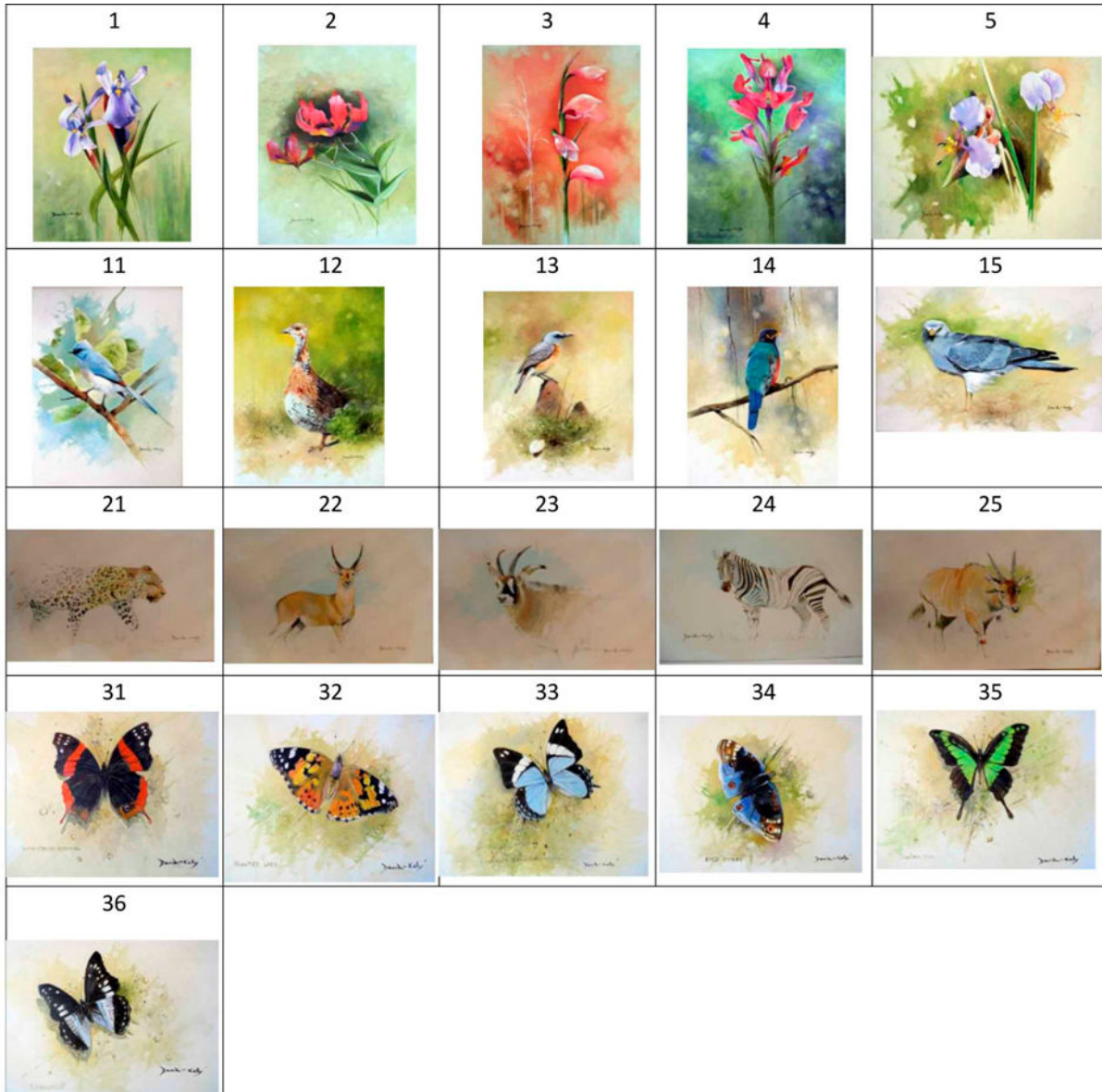
A very big 'thank you' for your support.

## Greetings cards

Once again, we have a special offer on our beautiful flora and fauna cards, painted by David Kelly for NVT. They do not need to be ordered in packs of the same theme and you can buy any selection in any quantity.

To order please send your list of card numbers from the cards illustrated below, and the quantity of each required, to the Secretary, NVT at email [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com), or by post at 50 Brewery Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 4NA, UK.

Cards are priced at £5.50 per 5 cards + P&P. Please let us have your order by 31 October 2022. The cards are 150mm x 105mm and are blank on the inside.



# Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust

Promotional Evening with a discussion led by Leejiah Dorward  
at the Union Jack Club,  
Sandell Street, London SE1 8UJ on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

“Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; what is it and who is it for?”

## Application Form for Tickets

Admission tickets are £16 per person or £8 per student.

I would like to apply for..... tickets to the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust evening 15th November 2022 for the persons named below.

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

Alternatively you may email your application to the Hon Secretary, NVT UK Trust, [sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com), quoting your name and email and phone contact, and listing your guests, and make payment direct to the Trust's account at Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-90-89, account number 44504860.

(Please complete in block letters)

<b>Name of applicant:</b>		Ticket number
<b>Organisation name (if applicable):</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		Date issued
<b>Contact Tel. number:</b>		
<b>Email address:</b>		

### Names of other people for whom tickets are requested

<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Name:</b>		

If paying by cheque please return this form, with your remittance to Peter Lawrance, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Nyika Vwaza (UK) Trust, 50 Brewery Road, Horsell, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4NA.

## 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), or direct to NVT's UK bank – see details below.

Prices:

**UK:** £20, incl. p&p, direct to the Trust's account at Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-90-89, account number 44504860

**Overseas:** direct to Lloyds Bank plc account (IBAN GB94LOYD30908944504860), account name The Nyika-Vwaza UK Trust, or by banker's draft) £28, including p&p.

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 Lloyds Bank plc, sort code 30-90-89, account number 44504860,

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

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:.....

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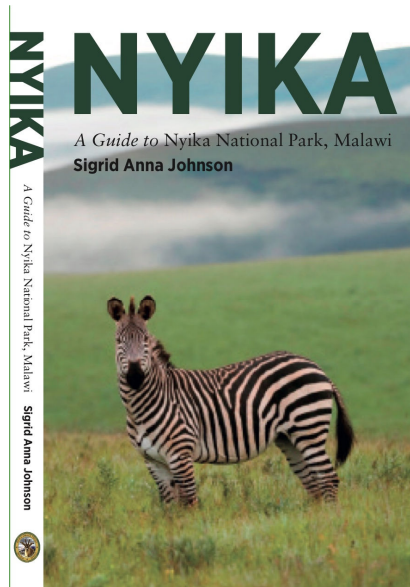
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**50 Brewery Road**  
**Woking, Surrey, GU21 4NA, UK**



The Nyika Guide  
© Sigi Johnson





**The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust**  
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GU21 4NA  
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*Working for environmental and wildlife conservation in northern Malawi.*

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

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[sec.nvt@gmail.com](mailto:sec.nvt@gmail.com)

**Friends of the Nyika-Vwaza Trust**

**Donation Form**

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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 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.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_