



ANNUAL | 20
REVIEW | 23





DISCOVER A ROCHA KENYA

A Rocha Kenya (ARK) is one of 21 national organisations of A Rocha, an international Christian conservation organisation that is **committed to practical biodiversity conservation** through scientific research, environmental education and sustainable community-based conservation programmes.

A Rocha bases its work on the recognition that the Bible clearly teaches about the importance of the environment as God's creation.

The Bible speaks about **God's love for his world and of our responsibility to look after it**. Ours is a mandate to care for the earth. To use it, yes, but wisely and not to over-exploit, destroy or degrade it.

OUR VISION

Nature conserved & people transformed.

OUR MISSION

To conserve and restore threatened habitats and biodiversity through research, environmental action, advocacy and community empowerment.

Our Core Commitments



We follow Jesus Christ, who created the world and calls us to care for it.



We protect and restore nature and are committed to local places and people over the long term.



We celebrate the insights, perspectives and solutions offered by our diverse cultures.



We invest in good relationships through our commitment to God, one another and the wider creation.



We seek to work with anyone who shares our vision.



Cover image

Tree planting at Arabuko Primary School

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

“Through it all we continue to revel in what the God of creation is doing in and through our work. His is the ultimate partnership which we value the most.”

Colin Jackson, A Rocha Kenya Director.

At a time when wildlife and habitats are struggling more and more under pressure from increasing human impact, it continues to be a privilege and delight to work to both understand ecosystems better as well as partner with others to protect them. Furthermore, with so much news of environmental catastrophes around the world, it is a joy to bring God’s hope into the lives of communities and the ecosystems they live in and beside.

This is reflected in the stories of the Assets beneficiaries shared here. For them, being supported with our Eco-bursaries gave them the boost to get jobs and support their families and a solid awareness of the importance of caring for creation.

Partnerships are core to how A Rocha works. To link with Kenya Wildlife Service for coral and shark research, breeding tern colony monitoring, and studying bird migration in Tsavo West National Park has been an honour. Furthermore, the Kenya Forest Service has been instrumental in the success of the Sokoke Forest MTB Challenge and our work with the forest-adjacent communities.

Further afield, the GBIF (Global Biodiversity Information Facility) biodiversity data digitization project was all about partnering – with no less than 11 partners across five countries to make tens of thousands of data on African forest birds, butterflies, plants and mammals freely available for scientists and conservationists around the world.

Data without digestible outputs doesn’t help conserve anything. This was a major thrust of the GBIF project and has been behind taking on a Data Manager funded by another partner, the Rain Forest Trust, to help turn data into something which can be used by project managers, donors and decision-makers alike.

Whilst being a conservation organisation focused on biodiversity, people have always been central to A Rocha’s work. A large part of this has been a steady flow of volunteers through Mwamba. These have blessed us in countless ways from making beds and cutting carrots to data management, art, photography, shark surveys and deep statistical data analysis! In this review you will meet some of our awesome staff, of whom eight of the nine started as volunteers with us! THANK YOU to all those who have volunteered and partnered with us.

Through it all we continue to revel in what the God of creation is doing in and through our work. His is the ultimate partnership which we value the most.



Colin Jackson
A Rocha Kenya Founder and Director



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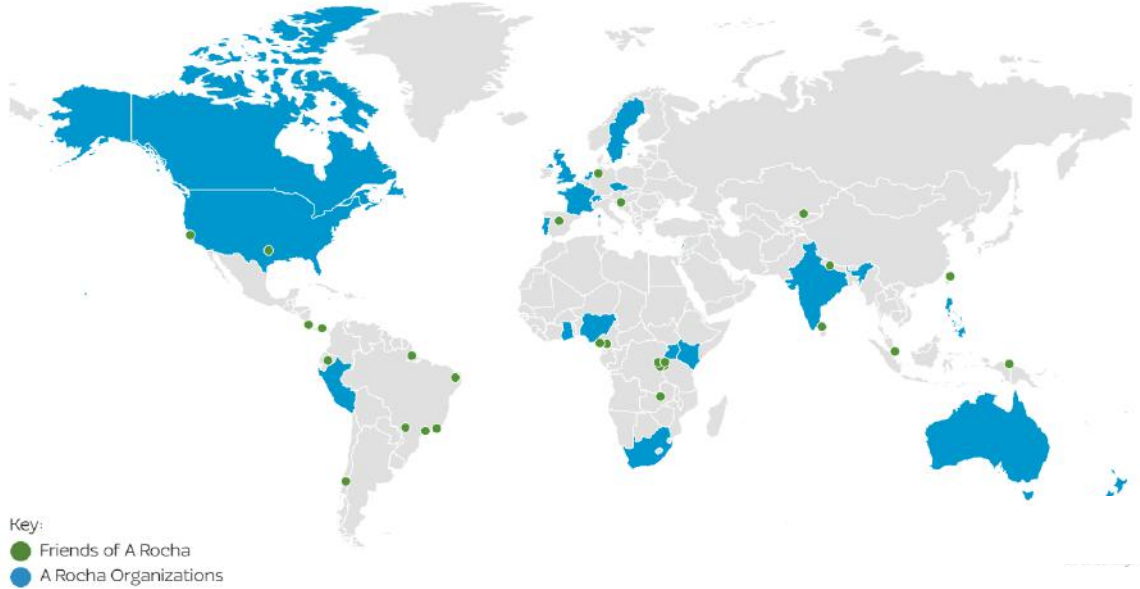
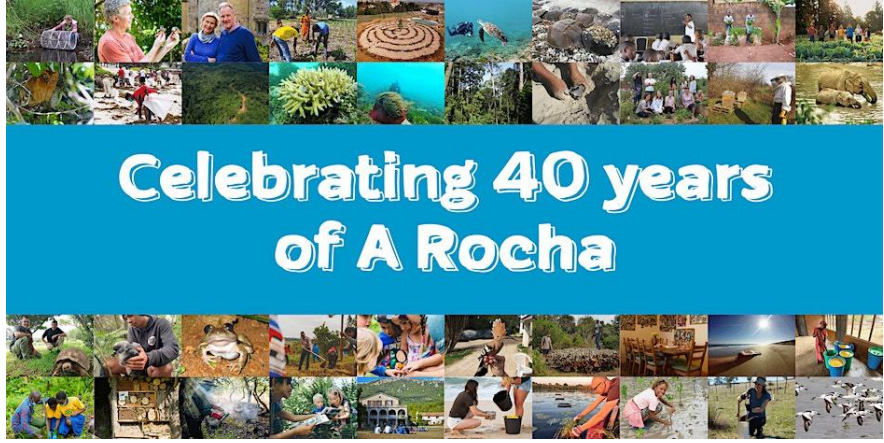
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

2023 marked the 40 year anniversary of A Rocha worldwide - a milestone we celebrated appropriately in Kenya as well!

A total of 51 staff members, friends, and family gathered for a day of fun, praise, and celebration. We enjoyed God's beautiful creation by going snorkeling together, and we had times of fellowship reflecting on the past 40 years, fun and games, films, and an A Rocha trivia quiz to learn about A Rocha worldwide!

A Rocha worldwide

Established in 1983, A Rocha has been responding to the global crisis of biodiversity loss by carrying out community-based conservation projects in over 20 countries worldwide.



Conservation initiatives include:

- ecological monitoring and research in areas of high value for wildlife
- practical measures for conserving and restoring habitats and their fauna and flora
- participation in nature conservation, through environmental education and community outreach
- providing a forum for understanding the relevance of the Christian faith to environmental issues.



VISION

To live out God's calling to care for creation and equip others to do likewise.



MISSION

A world where nature flourishes as people live equitably and sustainably.

Did you know?

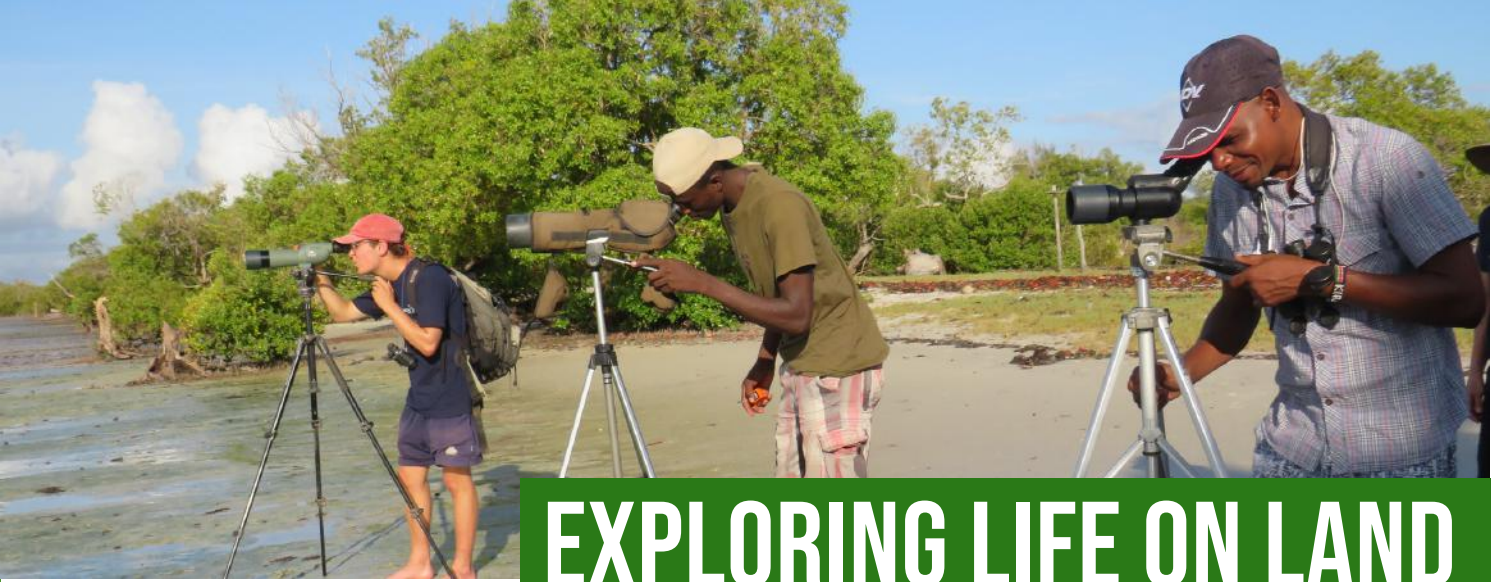


A Rocha means 'The Rock' in Portuguese, as the first initiative was a field study centre in Portugal.

Why the Rock?

Because bedrock is the foundation of all life on earth and Christ is our solid rock supporting all life in the universe.





EXPLORING LIFE ON LAND

“

On many fronts, 2023 was a busy year for our department. In addition to the many exciting projects we carry out every year, such as the Waterbird counts and Plant Phenology, we also rolled out new projects, such as contributing to a new satellite tracking programme for waders in Tanzania. It was a fulfilling year, and I thank the team for making it all work.” Kirao Lennox, Terrestrial Science Programme Lead



Waterbird counts

Waterbirds can help tell the story of an ecosystem. The status of their populations gives insights into the effects of climate change, resource over-exploitation, and habitat destruction. For example, shrinking water bodies due to unreliable rains will lead to lower counts. Less intuitively, excessive rainfall also leads to fewer waterbirds, as higher water levels do not offer favourable habitats for waders.

Every year, the **National Museums of Kenya** lead a waterbird census nationwide. As well as monthly counts at Mida and Sabaki, A Rocha organizes the annual north coast counts, covering seasonal wetlands, coastlines, and salt pans with large numbers of waterbirds. Sadly, this year, many of the seasonal lakes were dry, which meant very few waterbirds. The highlight was finding 259 Pacific Golden Plovers on the Tana Delta, the highest number since ARK started waterbird monitoring!

A sad encounter



Our first stop - Lake Jilore - was a rather sad sight. The lake was dry except for a small pool of stagnant water at the center. We had counted **thousands** of waterbirds in previous years (e.g., 3 507 in 2019), but during this visit, we only counted **950 birds**.

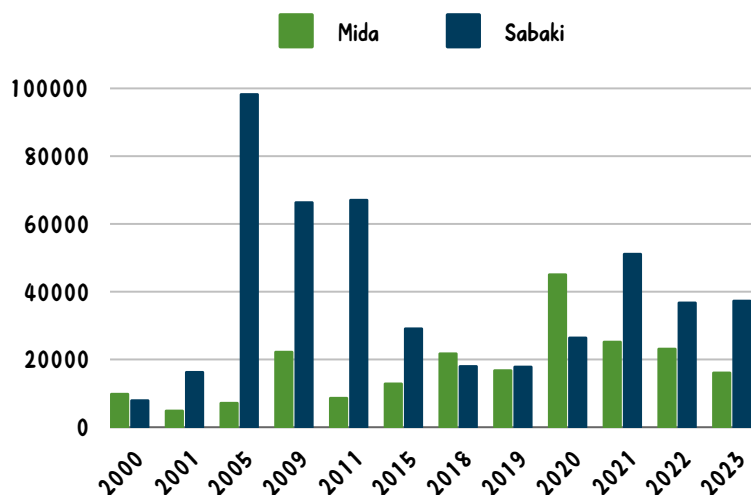
Towards the end of the count, we saw a Glossy Ibis caught in a trap. Thankfully, we were able to release this bird. However, we counted 15 more traps in the area. We're working on providing Environmental Education in those areas to minimize waterbird hunting in the future.



11 sites
94 species
85,716 birds

In addition to the annual waterbird counts, A Rocha carries out monthly waterbird monitoring of two key sites along the coast: Mida Creek and Sabaki River Mouth.

Comparing waterbird counts at Mida and Sabaki



Often Sabaki River Mouth has always held more birds than Mida.

Here are a few reasons why:

- Waterbirds favour Sabaki's muddy environment. Mida's surface is more rocky, which is less favoured by waterbirds.
- While Mida has only a few tens of flamingoes, Sabaki is home to thousands of these beautiful birds.
- Terns also feature in more abundant numbers in Sabaki than in Mida.

Bird ringing at Mwamba



Thursday bird-ringing at Mwamba has become a central event of the week, gathering staff, volunteers, and guests of all ages in a spirit of inquisitiveness and sharing.

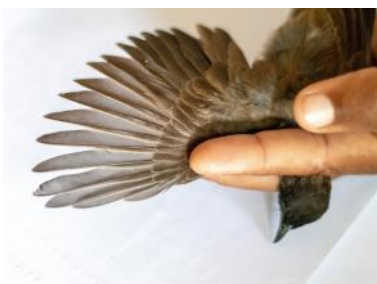
Birds are caught in mist nets, ringed, and measured before being released. The aim is to track their movements and learn more about their lifespans and habitats.

We use unique branded rings that help tell where the bird was ringed if it is a re-trap. This year, we caught a Common Nightingale, a Palearctic migrant first ringed at Mwamba in 2021! This was an exciting discovery, confirming how migrant birds can use the exact same stopover site to rest and refuel during their long migration journeys.

551
birds ringed

162
retraps

Can you guess what our two most commonly caught species were? Here are photos below:



answers on p. 26!



Whale Island

Whale Island, found in the Watamu Marine Park, is a vital seabird breeding sanctuary. In partnership with [KWS](#), we are wholeheartedly dedicated to closely monitoring the breeding progress of these magnificent birds and offering crucial management recommendations for the preservation of this precious site. In 2023, our team conducted three visits to the island.

During our initial visit, we observed the birds laying eggs, with an impressive count of nearly 800 nests. Notably, the island holds significant importance for the flourishing population of Roseate Terns, boasting over 2,500 individuals. Unfortunately, due to unpredictable rainfall patterns and storms, many birds abandoned their nests as most of the eggs were rained on. As a result, their breeding success was not as significant as in previous years, which raises considerable concern.

House Crows No More

Late last year, we carried out two counts of house crows (an invasive species from India) in Watamu roost to assess the number of crows in this area. The last count, done a few years prior, recorded over 6,000 crows. In September, when we did the last count for the year, we counted **12,000 crows!**

Because of their high breeding success, the crow population is expected to increase dramatically. We hope to start monitoring and assessing their foraging sites and later controlling their populations in 2024, ultimately eradicating the species from the country.



Habitat assessment

Data is crucial to make informed conservation decisions.

To this end, the science team collaborated with the Environmental team in Dakatcha to conduct a habitat assessment of the Dakatcha Woodland. The main agenda for the evaluation was to ascertain the effects of human activities such as charcoal burning and farming on the woodland.

We realized many trees were cut for charcoal burning, especially in areas outside the A Rocha Kenya Dakatcha Nature Reserve(ARDNR). The most affected areas were patches with Cynometra forest (as charcoal from these trees burns longer), also a prime habitat for the endangered Sokoke Scops Owl. Logging for charcoal burning was identified as the primary contributor to destruction, accounting for about 41 % of the trees cut. As the reports indicated, the protection of ARDNR has highly regulated human activities in the reserve.





NGULIA BIRD RINGING

We arrived at Ngulia to find it lush and green with flooded roads and mud - a stark contrast to the dryness of 2022. However, while wet conditions are needed to generate the mist at night to bring the migrating birds down to the spot lights where we place the nets, it doesn't automatically mean 'rain = good catching'. This year, despite the wet conditions we only managed three days with >1,000 birds ringed. There was not a single night when the mist came in with the 'classic Ngulia' conditions and we were really busy. This resulted in a below average total of 7,741 birds ringed.

However, there was still some 'sparkle' to the catch including only the second time a European Bee-eater has been ringed at Ngulia (4 were ringed in 2004), a Chiffchaff on 9th Dec was only

the 3rd ringed at Ngulia since 1969. Three Eurasian Golden Orioles were caught including a stunning adult male. A highlight on 14th was a Barn Swallow with a dull ring - from Kazakhstan! This was the only control of the year.

Overall, however, it would seem like numbers of esp Marsh Warblers, once the 'bread & butter' of Ngulia are reduced.

An additional 311 Afrotropical birds of 61 species were ringed including three Cardinal Quelea, again only the second time caught at Ngulia since 1969 (three were ringed in 1997); there was also the first Reichenow's Seedeater since 1998, the 6th Hunter's Sunbird, 8th Bare-eyed Thrush and 9th Red-headed Weaver.

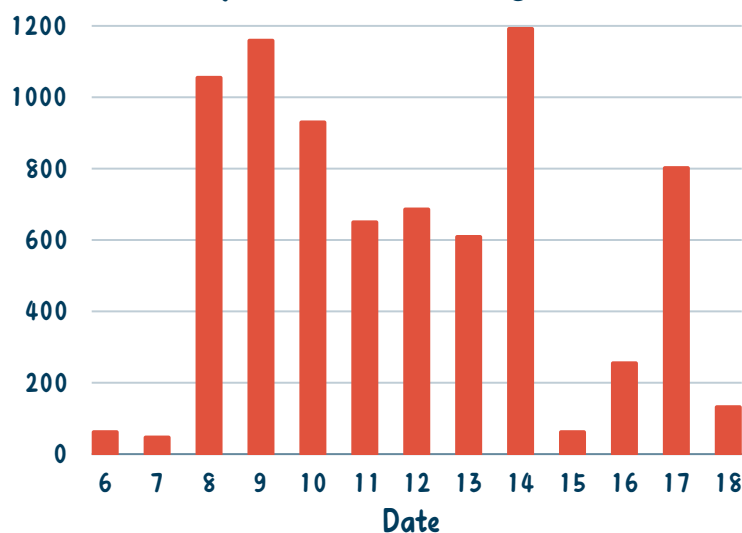


Chiffchaff

One of the highlights of this year: a young Barn Swallow with a ring inscribed 'KAZAKHSTAN ALMATY', over 6 000km away!



Daily totals of birds ringed





EXPLORING LIFE IN THE SEA

“

The Marine Programme continued its amazing work in the Watamu Marine National Park and the wider protected area. In 2023, we focused on coral research and conservation, protection of elasmobranchs, and habitat restoration. We also continued to expand our collaborations with organizations interested in conserving the Watamu Marine Reserve.

Peter Musila, Marine Programme Lead



12 years later

The A Rocha Kenya marine programme celebrated 12 years of working in Watamu, starting in 2011. Over the years, the programme has focused on various issues, including coral bleaching, reef ecology, marine tourism, endangered species protection, biodiversity inventories, habitat mapping, and ecosystem restoration. We also collaborated intensely with the reserve managers of KWS, local partners, and the community. This work feeds into the current management plan through timely reporting and presentations.

Coral research and conservation



The Marine team conducted its biannual coral monitoring to study coral bleaching, resilience, and recruitment of juvenile corals in the Watamu Marine National Park. This long-term experiment tracks over 300 coral colonies in four sites within the reserve's full no-take zone.

This monitoring helps us learn about the main threats to the Watamu coral reef ecosystem and observe some potentially resistant corals adapting to the changing oceans.

Building on our monitoring work, we recently launched a coral gardening pilot study, which could create opportunities for future community-led coral restoration projects in the area.

Protecting elasmobranchs



Marine wildlife comes in many colors and forms. Among these are elasmobranchs, the apex predators of the aquatic food chain.

Elasmo-what? Elasmobranchs are a subclass of marine wildlife comprising sharks, rays, skates, and sawfishes. Sadly, their populations are declining globally, and over 30% of elasmobranch species are threatened with extinction.

The Watamu Marine Protected Area (WMPA) is a haven for these amazing creatures.

Our marine team conducts weekly excursions to track their populations and observe their habitat needs within the park.

Thanks to the data collected over the years, Watamu Marine Park was selected as an important Shark and Ray Area in the IUCN selection criteria. This has, in turn, improved the park's protection status, which brings with it improved policies. It has also made it a destination of choice for more researchers and academics interested in Sharks and Rays.

The park has also been selected as a foraging and breeding ground for several endangered species, including the critically endangered Halavi guitarfish.

Habitat restoration



With funding from Ocean Conservancy through the **International Coastal Cleanup**, we organized 10 mass beach cleanups. We involved over **500 community volunteers** and **collected five tons of plastics** and marine debris from more than 20km stretch along Watamu seashores. This plastic waste was taken to the Eco-world plant for reuse and recycling.



IUCN. (2022). The IUCN red list of threatened species. Version 2022-2. Available at: <https://www.iucnredlist.org>

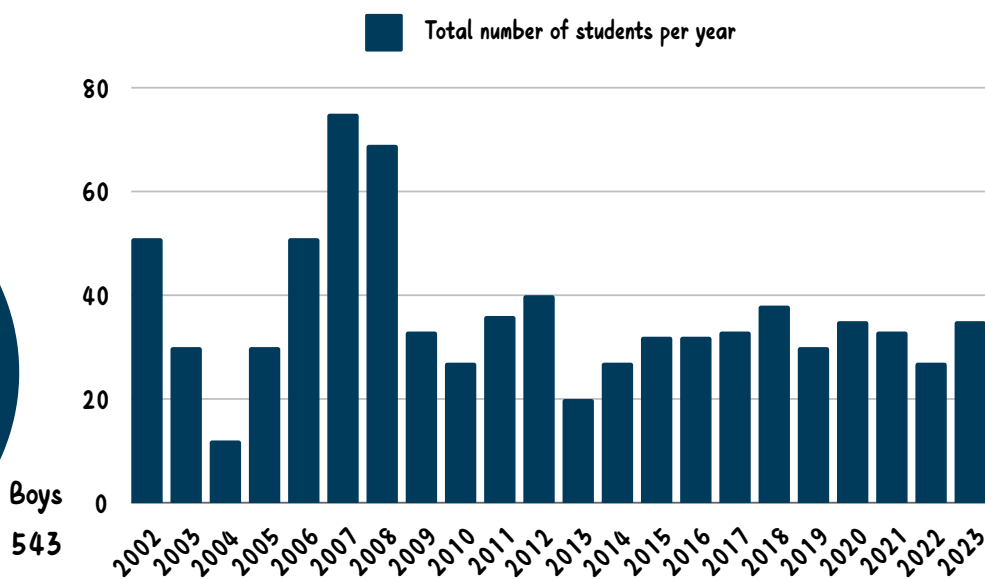
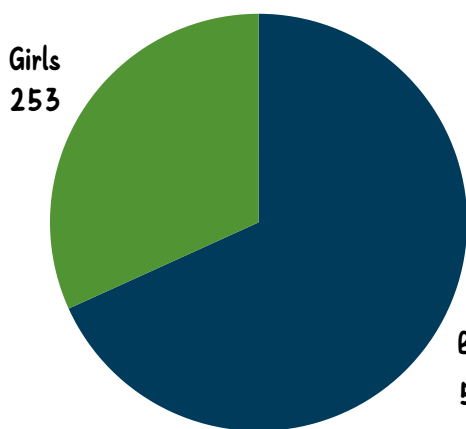


ASSETS: VISION TURNED TO ACTION

For the last 21 years, ASSETS (the Arabuko-Sokoke Schools and Eco-Tourism Scheme) has been vital in transforming the lives of hundreds of families and kids around Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Mida Creek. Since it was founded in 2002, ASSETS has been doing excellent work supporting students through school, creating awareness in the community surrounding ASF and Mida Creek, and teaching the importance of conservation to the young generation. We have seen our vision come to life over the years: people transformed and nature conserved.

The graphs below are a simple representation of where we are at after over two decades. In the prior years, we typically had more boys than girls attending school. But over the years, more families have been seeking bursaries for their daughters, so the number of girls supported by ASSETS has increased yearly.

Total numbers since 2002



This programme is heavily funded by private donations in addition to eco-tourism revenue, so none of this would have been possible without ongoing support from our donors. If you'd like to support this exciting programme today, follow the link on the next page or write to us at assets@arocha.org.

Stories from our beneficiaries



My name is **Daniel Kazungu**. I grew up in Coastal Kenya, a neighbor of the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest in Kilifi County. I attended primary school at Bogamachuko Primary, one of the pioneer schools in the ASSETS programme.

In 2006, I took my final primary school examination and was offered a place at Lenana School in Nairobi. However, the **high tuition fees** presented a **significant hurdle** for my family and **threatened my education**.

My father, a strong advocate for education, approached A Rocha seeking assistance through the ASSETS programme. To my immense joy, they generously covered all of the first-term school fees, making it possible for me to enroll at Lenana School. This marked the **beginning of a remarkable journey**, enabling me to complete my high school education through ASSETS.

In 2010, I successfully concluded my secondary education and enrolled at Moi University in Eldoret to pursue my undergraduate studies. My journey took an exciting turn when I returned and joined A Rocha in the ASSETS program, where I contributed to fundraising and contributed to environmental education initiatives. Presently, I work as a specialist in humanitarian emergencies, which has provided me with invaluable insights into the devastating impacts of climate change. This experience underscores the urgency of environmental conservation in our current times like never before!

Stella (left) and **Doris** (right) are current beneficiaries of ASSETS. Stella first interacted with ASSETS in class 8 at Mida Primary School. She appreciates the ASSETS programme because it has not only helped with her fee payment but also taught her the importance of environmental conservation. **"I have been practically carrying out what we have been taught in Environmental education through planting trees in my home."**

Doris also learned about ASSETS while she was in class 8 at Kahingoni Primary School. She claims that she knew how to plant and care for trees. She also acknowledges that the lessons that come with this programme play a vital role in shaping her perception of environmental conservation.



Would you like to support a child with an ASSETS eco-bursary?



DONATE



RACING FOR CONSERVATION



The annual Sokoke Forest Mountain Bike Challenge seeks to raise awareness about the need to conserve Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and raise funds for ASSETS.

2023 marked the fifth edition of the race, gathering 74 starters and 63 finishers, including our first international rider, Megan from Cape Town! Sweat and more sweat through sand and more sand, spectacular summersaults on the steep descent, elephant views along the forest section, and a dramatic sprint finish involving six of Kenya's top riders; this year's challenge was a memorable event for all!

Heavy rainfall earlier in May made two of the steep descents from previous years impassable due to deep gullying. This resulted in a slightly less challenging route with only one steep but short ascent.

The descent preceding it, however, was technically challenging. It was steep and deeply rutted, leading to several falls.

However, a significant increase in the length of a single track on often sandy terrain added to the challenge and made it entertaining, with many riders biting the sand where it got deep.



We raised Ksh 500,000 for ASSETS, which will provide 13 eco-bursaries for needy children living around the threatened habitats of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Mida Creek.

Over the last two decades, ASSETS has demonstrated its impact in changing the lives of hundreds of students and protecting habitats. The MTB Challenge and the Mida boardwalk directly contribute to this scheme. Whether you participate in the race, share information about it in your circles, or sponsor the race, you can make a difference in the conservation of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and see a child through school!

Find out more about how you can join on sokokeforestmtb.or.ke





ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Our Environmental Education department is divided into three major groups, each focusing on a specific geographic area.

1 Arabuko-Sokoke Education

Our education team, working with communities around Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, focused on tree nurseries and tree planting. We were blessed with abundant rainfall, especially in June. The team worked closely with community members, schools, government institutions, and hospitals to plant trees. By the end of the year, **we had planted 67,376 trees!**

We are grateful to the I&M Foundation through KCDF for funding this project. Thanks to their generous donation, we nurtured seedlings, transferred them to different sites, and aided the planting sessions.

The fund also enabled us to provide water tanks to community members to help with water harvesting. This makes watering the plants easier and more sustainable, maximizing the chances of seedlings growing into trees.

2 Marine Education

Our marine education, led by Queen, engaged 380 kids from eight schools close to Watamu Marine Park. The theme of the year was **“Increasing knowledge on and appreciation of Marine Protected Areas.”** The objective was to help them understand the rationale behind creating Marine protected areas and their significance to the ecosystem and the economy.

Students were asked to draw an imaginary coastline separating land and ocean, designate a marine protected area, and create rules to govern the ocean and marine protected areas.

It was encouraging to hear students express how they enjoyed this exercise, especially creating rules for their marine protected areas. But what was even more encouraging was knowing that they clearly understood why those rules were necessary!

3 Dakatcha Education

Our focus for the year was "**Protecting Pollinators.**" We collaborated with 12 schools in Dakatcha to increase awareness of pollinators' pivotal role in our environment and food system. During our interactions with students, we discovered that most of them associated the term "pollinator" with honeybees. Our goal was to broaden their knowledge of pollinators and emphasize their importance.

During the sessions, students were taught about the different kinds of pollinators and challenged to think about where pollinators get their food. They were surprised to learn that pollinators rely on flowers for their survival.

Students created pollinator-friendly gardens comprising flower and vegetable gardens to emphasize the significance of caring for pollinators. They could observe and study the pollinators' activities in the gardens and were careful not to harm them.

The Dakatcha EE team mapped open areas of abandoned charcoal kilns areas degraded through farming within the 205ha of the ADNR, and **10,000 trees were planted** with tree species conducive to the mapped area.





SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

interventions that aim to reduce activities deemed to be environmentally damaging

As our work focuses on protecting ecosystems destroyed by overexploitation, promoting alternative sources of livelihoods is critical to our conservation efforts. In 2023, we expanded our kitchen gardening and bee-keeping initiatives.

1 KITCHEN GARDENING

setting apart a space for growing vegetables, herbs, and fruit for everyday use inside the kitchen

Our environmental education team introduced Kitchen Gardening as a sustainable alternative livelihood among communities around the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest to grow vegetables using kitchen wastewater.

Alternative livelihoods are prosperous when the community members understand and love the project. We, therefore, based participation on voluntary registrations. This proved a big success, as we **engaged 144 women in making kitchen gardens in their households**, well above the targeted 50!

The level of project ownership exhibited by these women was astounding. Many bought their seeds in addition to what we had provided to increase the variety of vegetables. They also planted herbs such as lemongrass and aloe vera. Some women convinced their children to join in and even had several gardens in their homes!

In Dakatcha, the Environmental Education team also trained women in establishing kitchen gardens. In total, 18 women adopted the technique. This approach **improved food security by providing consistent supplies of nutritious and culturally relevant food in the community.**

Despite facing challenges with water availability, they persevered, and many shared positive feedback. One woman, Mama Janet, expressed how the gardens had positively influenced her household, as they no longer had to worry about sourcing vegetables.





2 BEE KEEPING IN DAKATCHA

2023 was a key milestone in A Rocha Kenya's efforts to create a peaceful co-dependence between the rural community of Dakatcha and its unique biodiversity. A key part of this work has been the rollout of beekeeping as an alternative livelihood.

Our apiaries have flourished throughout the year. **80 hives were distributed in three villages**, with fifteen farmers involved. Each received four hives, 20 of which were placed within the A Rocha Dakatcha Nature Reserve (ARDNR).

Over this period, we witnessed farmers planting and caring for over 83 fruit trees and 51 indigenous trees. They have started appreciating the invaluable role of trees and bees in the ecosystem of pollination and honey production.

Our educational workshops and outreach campaigns were critical in equipping the farmers with basic apiary management skills.

Unfortunately, long dry periods led to the absconding (when all the bees, including the queen, leave the nest) of 18 out of the initial 63 colonized hives. This underscored the importance of adaptive management and collaborative efforts within the bee-keeping community. Farmers built shades and even provided water for the bees, and they were rewarded with honey from the 45 colonized hives.





DATA DIGITISATION

Our regional biodiversity data mobilization project, which spanned four countries—Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and Ghana—concluded in April 2023. Eleven conservation organizations and five A Rocha organizations implemented the project in collaboration with their local partners.

In 2023, 34 datasets totaling 67,605 biodiversity records were published on the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#) database. This collaborative project established new partnerships and strengthened existing ones within the African region.

Before the project concluded, we held nine dissemination meetings across Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and Ghana advocating for the use of the published biodiversity data for decision and policy making.

GHANA

A practical use of this data was demonstrated during the dissemination meeting. It sparked an interest for a collaboration between the government, NGOs and the local communities living around Atewa forest.

KENYA

The data was used to update information about Dakatcha Woodland, a Key Biodiversity Area that was proposed in 2004, and more endangered wildlife such as the Golden-Rumped Sengi were discovered many years after its designation as a KBA.

NIGERIA

The data was used to raise awareness among local communities and government institutions about important species found in the forests of Kwande and Obanliku and to advocate for their protection.

UGANDA

The dissemination meeting was an eye opener for all key stakeholders to work collaboratively to restore and conserve the West Bugwe forest.

DAKATCHA NATURE RESERVE

Dakatcha Woodland, a unique coastal dry forest, is the only known breeding site for the endemic Clarke's Weaver and, besides the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, the only habitat in Kenya where the endangered Sokoke Scops Owl and the Golden-rumped Sengi occur.

Despite being a Key Biodiversity Area, the woodland has been shrinking alarmingly. Since 2012, scores of charcoal kilns and hundreds of motorbikes overloaded with bags of charcoal have been a common sight in the Dakatcha woodland. This was further compounded by a land adjudication exercise by the National Government that led to a land speculation frenzy by both local people and many more from upcountry.

At this rate, A Rocha Kenya had no choice but to join the land purchase frenzy in a bid to secure a reasonable size of good-quality habitat for the protection of these species, which are under acute threat of extinction due to habitat loss. Since purchasing its first parcel of land in 2014, A Rocha Kenya has secured over 7,000 acres of prime habitat turned into a nature reserve.

In 2023, we purchased 2,237 acres of land, almost double the size acquired in 2022 (1,487 acres), most notably with our largest land purchase yet (548 acres) in November.

In parallel to land purchase, we are creating and implementing a Management Plan for the reserve. Seven community scouts have been recruited and trained to patrol the forest and collect data for management action. Open areas of abandoned charcoal kilns and areas degraded through farming were mapped and 10 000 trees were planted with the exact tree species conducive to the mapped area



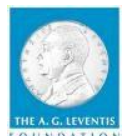
RAINFOREST
TRUST



CASSINIA
ENVIRONMENTAL



LORDSHIP AFRICA



THE A. G. LEVENTIS
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IUCN | National Committee
of The Netherlands



WORLD
LAND
TRUST



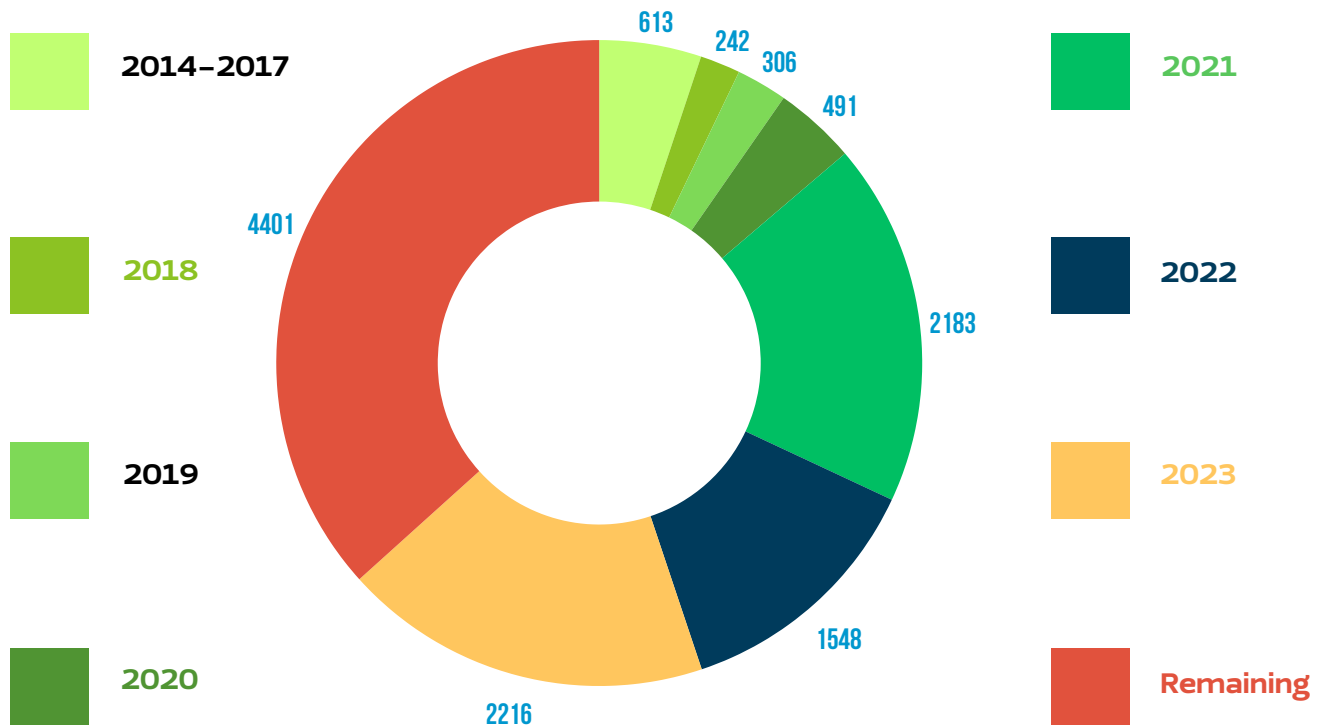
CARU
containers

DAKATCHA NATURE RESERVE



We have consistently invested in acquiring land in Dakatcha since 2014. With nearly a decade of experience in this endeavor, you may be eager to learn about the extent of our land holdings and our progress toward our target. The chart below will provide you with the answers you seek.

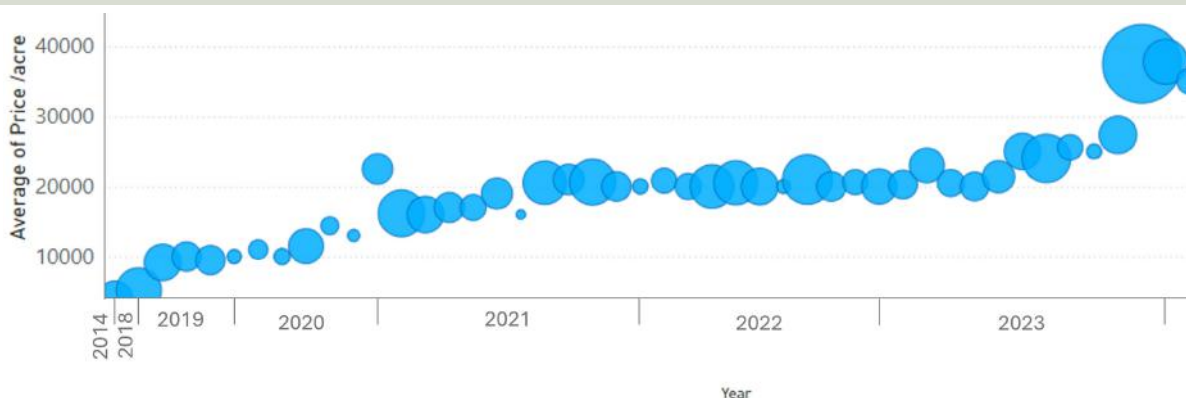
Land purchased over the years



Trends in Average Price per Acre Over Time

When we began land procurement in 2014, the average price per acre was just 4,000 Kenyan Shillings (\$22.74), making it relatively affordable to secure land. Over the next several years, prices saw a steady and predictable increase, reflecting growing demand and perhaps a tightening supply. By September 2021, the average price had risen to 20,000 KES, marking a significant five-fold increase. At this point, prices appeared to stabilize, allowing for some predictability in land acquisition planning.

However, this period of stability was short-lived. Toward the end of 2022, we began to witness a dramatic shift in the market. Prices started climbing rapidly, driven by increased competition for land, economic shifts, and perhaps a growing awareness of land as a valuable long-term investment. By 2023, the average price had surged to over 40,000 KES per acre, doubling in just a couple of years. In just a decade, the price of land has increased tenfold.





"Conservation work can feel overwhelming, but A Rocha inspires hope through teamwork and collaboration."
Judy, Conservation



"There is no hospitality like understanding"
Betty, Mwamba



"There's beauty in conservation"
Stanley, Conservation

HEAR FROM OUR STAFF!



"A Rocha enables me to work in my favourite environment as well as enriching me spiritually as a Christian organisation"
Eric, Science



"The conservation approach is totally different, and everyone is so down to earth."
Rukia, Mwamba



"My favourite moments have been spending time with the community" -
Patrick Kilumo, ASSETS



"It's such a privilege to work with such an amazing team everyday"
Anna Radkovic, Dakatcha



"I have really enjoyed our Monday meetings"
Jonathan, Admin



"I love how friendly everyone at A Rocha is"
Maria, Science

19 years of faithful service

Michael has been working at ARK in the house-keeping department for almost two decades. His mission? Ensure everyone who comes through Mwamba feels welcome and well cared for! If you have ever been through Mwamba, you'll remember the well made beds, the perfectly cleaned rooms and the ironed sheets, all of which was accomplished by Michael's magic and loving hands.

According to Michael, the greatest satisfaction he gets from his work is seeing that everything is working well, that the rooms are well maintained and guests who pass through his hands leave feeling grateful. That's why, despite his busy schedule, Michael always finds time to talk to guests, to see if there is anything more he can do for them. He brought a lot to Mwamba and to its many guests throughout the years, but still he believes that he has gained a lot more from working with A Rocha Kenya.



Michael, we say thank you!

Hear it directly from Michael!

“ If I was working with money as my primary motivator, then I wouldn't have lasted this long. I stay at A Rocha Kenya because of the set-up, because of the beliefs that the organization embodies, and the faith we walk in. The Word shared here fills me and inspires me to serve all the guests I meet.



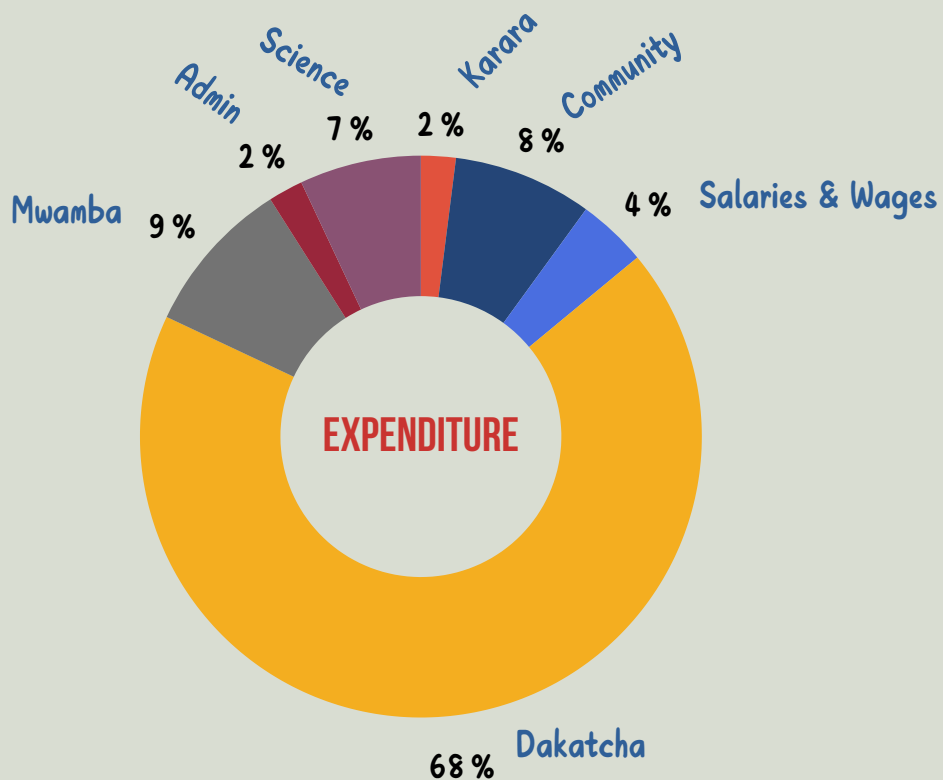
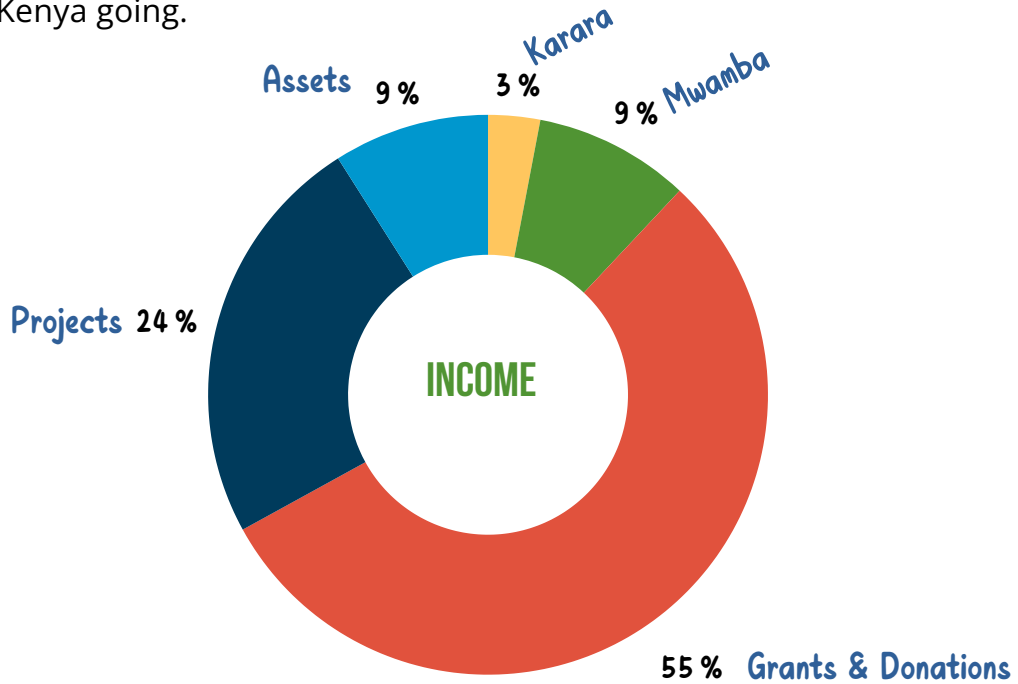
Hear from Annet, one of our returning guests:

“ Wow, Michael is always friendly and helpful. You can always count on him! If I ask Michael for a favor, he always does it without hesitation. Rooms are cleaned perfectly and he sees the needs of the guests even before they do. He is always well informed about what is going on, hence he can always answer questions. He is stable and steady factor in Mwamba. As guests, we appreciate Michael so much!

FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Compared to 2022 where we saw an all time high in the income received (**Ksh 129,876,179**), 2023 saw a decrease in our total income to **Ksh 103, 560, 157**. Over 78% of this income was from Grants and Donations for our Conservation Projects. The land purchase and reserve management of the A Rocha Dakatcha Nature Reserve brought in an income of **Ksh 94, 931, 439**.

We are grateful to donors, partners, friends, foundations, organizations and churches that have supported us this far. Every gift that we have received has been helpful in keeping the work of A Rocha Kenya going.





See children through secondary school and protect their local environment
Support ASSETS to make a practical difference today

From donating \$10 to pay for fast-growing seedlings that parents can sell instead of logging indigenous trees from a protected forest, to \$590 to cover all costs for a student for a full year - **your donation makes a difference**. To find out how, learn more about ASSETS, flick back to pp. 13-14 of this Review or go to our dedicated website to read student stories and more:



- **\$49/month** covers the monthly stipend for secondary school fees, environmental education activities and conservation activities with students' parents- that's only 12\$/week!
- **\$40** covers the cost of sending one student to the annual ASSETS camp, where students learn about and go explore their local environment, with rockpooling, scuba-diving, and forest excursions, among others!

To donate, simply go to our dedicated Global Giving page by clicking on the button below. The first of all recurring monthly donations will be matched by Global Giving!

Thank you for your generous support.



THANK YOU, DEAR PARTNER

Our work, heavily relies on the generous support from amazing people like you. From financially supporting our work to praying with us, it means a lot to have you by our side. We take pride in standing tall to give the environment a voice and take up the mandate that God has given us.

Through our work with the community, deep dives in the Indian ocean to care for the corals, endless mathematics to make the account books add up, and early mornings to make sure the nets are open and ready for the exciting bird ringing sessions, we have indeed felt the presence of God. And as we take a minute to look back at the many exciting things we got to do, we are humbled. Indeed, it has all worked out for good. Now we turn our attention to 2024, and the exciting adventures that await!



The work of A Rocha Kenya directly or indirectly contributes towards the following **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**



Bird ringing quiz (p.8) answers: The most commonly caught species are Common Bulbul (left) and Olive Sunbird (right)



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