

The Experience of a Lifetime! Safari in Tanzania.



Welcome readers! Who would've think it? The idea of a safari in Africa was well beyond me. Take any zoo experience, even the Walt Disney World version, and forget it!

Back in October of 2004, I met John and Trina. John is from Tanzania, Trina from the states. I sat in their little kitchen in Cairo and listened to stories of waking up to sounds of lions, seeing herds of wilderbeast and zebra, and watching herds of giraffes feed on tall trees. John made lion and hyena sounds. Trina told stories of Olduvai gorge, made popular by the paleontologist finds. I was the first on the long list of teachers wanting to go on safari.

Let's get it out of the way! Cost! The biggest cost is the flight from home. I know, I know. We already live in North Africa. We ended up paying just over a thousand US dollars for the entire trip. By the end of this newsletter, I hope to get mass emails requesting overall costs from the USA. Bring it on. You will hear horror stories of \$10,000 or more. No way. Kiboko Safaris prides itself as a quality, lower cost safari. Take a peak at their [WEBSITE](#) now. **It will be changing sometime before summer.** I promised John and Trina a new website look.

The Trip Details

Our Easter break gave us ten days to travel. We started by flying out of Cairo to Nairobi, Kenya. There were about 30 travelers from our school, if you include the family (hint hint) and friends that came for the trip.

We stopped in Khartoum, Sudan so the airline could kick off a few drunk Arabs and load up some new travelers. Other than that, it was a smooth trip from 12:30 am in Cairo to 7:30am in Nairobi, Kenya. A bus picked all of us up at the airport and drove us through Kenya for about four hours, over the border into Tanzania, and about another hour to Arusha. We arrived in John's hometown of Arusha (about 30,000 people) and split up to different hotels. From the moment we arrived in Nairobi, Kiboko Safari took care of everything!



Crap, my memory card is full!

This was our second cheetah sighting. On our way out of the Serengeti, we came upon a group of vehicles. When we stopped, all we could see was the carcass of the Thompson Gazelle. Just as we started to complain, up pops the cheetah from behind a tall bunch of grass. We were so lucky. Some groups don't get to see even one cheetah.

Our group had three cameras and three sets of binoculars. Even with three cameras, we had to delete a LOT of pictures. With shots like this one, it is easy to take a couple hundred shots in one afternoon. We came up with a camera plan. Each night we would recharge our batteries, go through all of our photos, and delete the multiple shots. I should have bought a 2 gig card in Beirut. Between the three cameras, we had about a gig and a half of memory. We had to take most of our shots at the lowest resolution.



Yes, this is a **PRIDE OF LIONS** feasting on a freshly killed wildebeest. We could NOT believe it. The alpha male came down from those trees, scared away all of the females, and took his lion's share of the kill.

We sat there and watched the feasting for about an hour. You could hear the bones being broken, the flesh tearing, and just sit there amidst the "oohs" and "aahs" of the few onlookers.

(Right) This was our second lion sighting. You can count about eleven lionesses, one young male stretched out in the sun, and be assured there was an alpha male sprawled out under a tree about a hundred yards away.



Moses spotted these sleeping lionesses from about two hundred yards away. The only way to get this shot with my camera was through a set of binoculars. Somehow, I got the camera to focus through a quality pair.



Each park we went to was known for its specific animals or animal behaviors. This was taken in the Lake Manyara Park. Lions in trees are rarely seen anywhere else.

What they call the Migration

There are about 2 million wildebeests in the Serengeti. Everywhere you look, there are herds. We had to stop our jeep two or three times because the herds were crossing over the road. As far as we could see, there were wildebeest galloping to keep with the herd.

Moses is a driver that has worked the parks for the last four years. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the animals. Did you know, a baby wildebeest can stand two minutes after birth? It will then run within six to seven minutes. We saw a lot of calves in the herds. The herds migrate with the water.

There is nothing like being surrounded by a herd of wildebeest, gazelle, elands, and zebra!



Kiboko Safari Animal Top 10

10. **The Migration**
9. **Three cheetahs together - five total**
8. **A charging hippo**
7. **Seeing the first steps of a Thompson Gazelle. (then three tawny eagles fighting over the placenta)**
6. **Hearing lions and hyenas while sleeping in a tent**
5. **Forgetful warthogs - "why am I running? Oh, yeah, a lion is chasing me!"**
4. **Baboon Porn - Live**
3. **lunch amidst herds of wild animals**
2. **A feasting pride of lions**
1. **Seeing 4 of the BIG FIVE animals**

Here we are, the Fab 4 having lunch in the Serengeti. We are surrounded by animals you see on the Discovery Channel. There are few words that can describe such an experience. I think I will go next year.

I would personally like to thank Moses for his knowledge and sense of humor, Chief for almost cooking green banana soup for us, Mooney for his artistic photos, Kevin and Angela for saying "eh" at the end of every Canadian sentence, and most of all...

a big Thank You to John and Trina for designing such a wonderful trip.





For five days and four nights, we traveled around Tanzania in our perspective groups via Safari Jeeps.

This trip took us through five game reserves, thousands of animals, and more picturesque scenery than fifty issues of National Geographic can provide.

See the maps: **AFRICA, TANZANIA** at the end of this Volume.

There were three main groups that went on our safari. Each group went on a different route through the five major parks. Mooney and I were fortunate. We were grouped with a pair of teachers from Alexandria, Kevin and Angela. They had heard about the safari from some of their friends that had gone over the Christmas break.

John was driving a different group, so he assigned Moses to be our driver and Chief Dodo as our camp cook. Moses could spot a lion at 200 yards without binoculars! Dodo prepared all of our meals while we were camping and provided non-stop conversation in Swahili throughout the trip.

We would drop off our gear at a campsite or lodge and open up the top of the jeep so we could stand up to see animals. Speaking of animals, read on.



The Animals, The Animals!



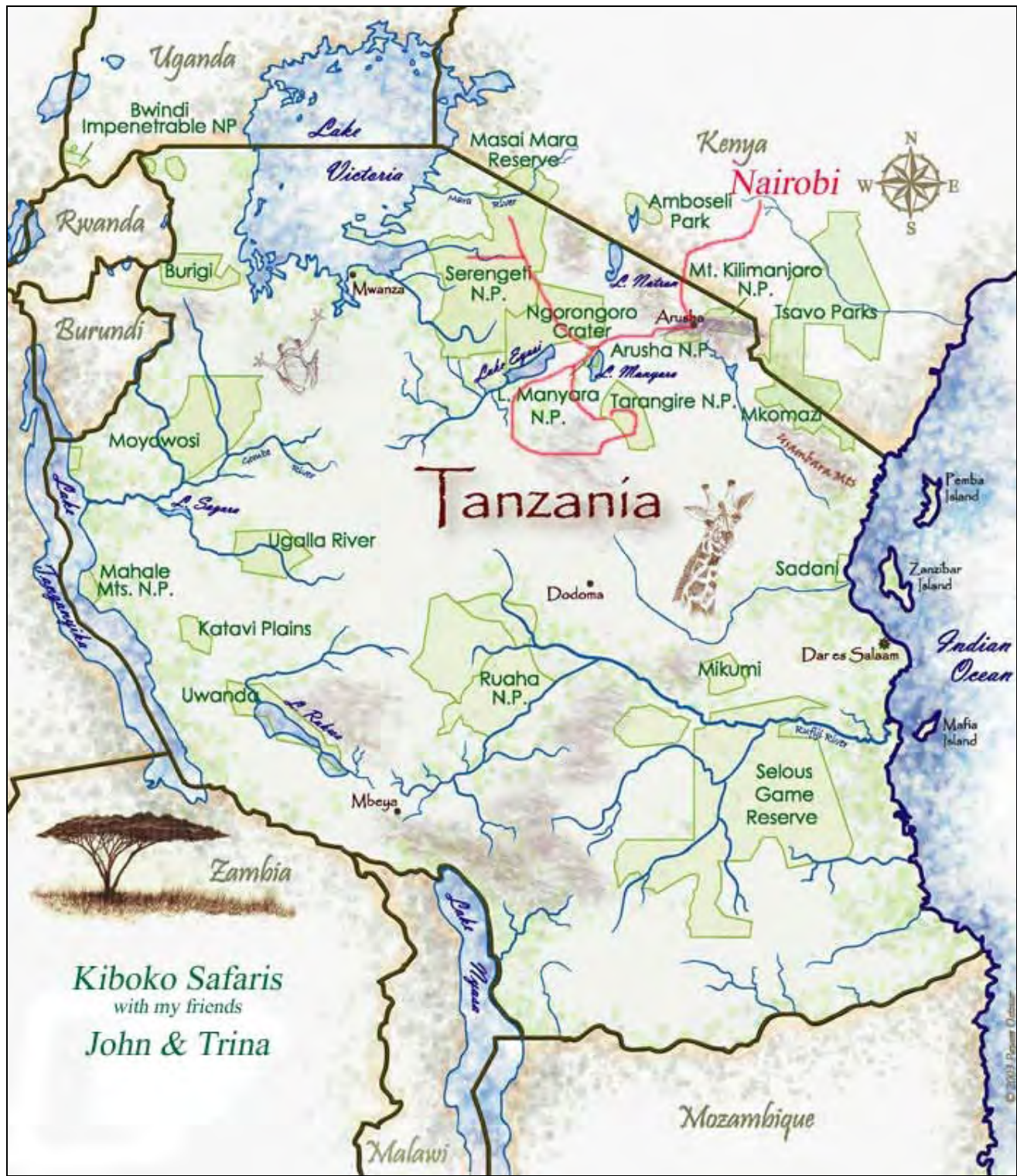
First of all, not everybody will see these animals. They are wild! The parks are huge and the animals are running free. You may come upon a group of vehicles along the track. All the people are standing up with cameras or binoculars. If you are lucky, the animals are in plain view, have killed something, or they know they are on camera and show off a bit.

This cheetah was a real treat! She was prowling through the grass searching for small game.



The black line shows the trip from Cairo, a stop at Khartoum, Sudan, and ending in Nairobi, Kenya.

From there we took a bus to Arusha, Tanzania and Safari Jeeps to the parks.



Kiboko Safaris
with my friends
John & Trina

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