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Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project - Looking for a team member.pdf;

Oxford University Exploration Club Michaelmas 2023 Week 8



Michaelmas in Review

What an absolutely outstanding term! In only eight short weeks, we've covered expedition funding and planning, delved into the OUEC archives, and had six fantastic proposals.

We heard reports from two members on their expeditions:

Michael Murphy questioned how explorer identities were impacted by missions off-world with his fieldwork with analogue space missions. Meanwhile, James Kempton made headlines with his now notorious rediscovery of Attendborough's Long-Beaked Echidna in the Cyclops Mountains.

Our delegation to RGS Explore was wildly successful, with presentations by Murphy and Kempton, as well as the members of the Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project (*see below). Of course, Seb Rumfitt and Monty Pierce Jones impressed Nigel Winsor so much with their upcoming project studying pumas that they were publicly gifted one of his rare books on the closing day!

We've also had some impressive guest speakers, with Marlon Clark from Basecamp Research telling us about the incredible work that they do on inclusion and networking in fieldwork, and Mihea Noroc demonstrating the power of photography for capturing human beauty.

We are deeply grateful to all of the members, new and old, for our speakers, and for our wider community. We have had a fantastic term, and we look forward to returning from winter break with new stories of new adventures!



Week 8 Meeting: No Meeting, Only Pub

In our final week of term, we will be consolidating all that we have learned and applying it liberally to a social setting in the traditional manner: a pub night. Please join us at The King's Arms for a night of assuredly responsible reflection, contemplation, and planning. After all, how many expeditions have started in a pub over an empty glass?

When: Nov 28, 19:30

Where: The King's Arms, Broad Street



Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project is Looking for Team Members!

The Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project is a joint Kenyan-UK venture established in 2022.

Il Ngwesi is Africa's first fully indigenous and community-owned eco-lodge and community conservation area, established in 1996 in Laikipia County, northern Kenya. Home of a wonderful Laikipiak Maasai community, who comprise half of the core team members, Il Ngwesi supports a diverse array of fauna including elephants, giraffes, leopards and rhinos, as well as abundant insects, reptiles, grasses and shrubs. Il Ngwesi's eco-lodge is truly world-class and has won multiple awards since its inception; it is seen as a true model for conservation that has inspired community conservancy and eco-lodge models across the region.

The project's goal is to establish Il Ngwesi's scientific research programme. The core research question is to quantify the differences in biodiversity between Il Ngwesi's core conservation area, grazing blocks and settlement areas. If you think you have what it takes to contribute to the team, or to find out more information, email Barbara Francik and Jamie Bolam at

barbara.francik@pmb.ox.ac.uk and jamiebolam@protonmail.com .

*see attached file.



Join our WhatsApp Group!

Members can now join our WhatsApp group by clicking on the following link:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GpEHUcol8veLC5mrJbgLSP>



Membership

Benefits of OUEC membership include:

- Free access to all our weekly talks & workshops
- Ability to apply for Expeditions Council funding
- Subsidised OUEC stash (fleeces, jackets and hats)
- Subsidised tickets to expedition related events across the country (e.g. RGS Explore)
- Access to a range of expedition planning resources and documents
- Access to a network of explorers and Oxford alumni
- Weekly opportunities to meet different explorers who come to speak for the Club
- An opportunity to be part of one of Oxford's oldest clubs with a long history of exploring the globe

Our current prices are:

Term - £10

Year - £20

Life - £35

Find out more and register here: <https://www.ouec.co.uk/membership>. Payment can be completed in-person at an event (cash or card), or via bank transfer.



Survey of Interests for Hilary Term

We would like to put together outings for Hilary Term. As you will see, there are a variety of topics that we could organize. It would be very helpful if anyone interested could fill out this form: [Link](#)



OUEC Platforms

Finally, please find all of our social media platforms and website below. This is the most up-to-date listing.

[OUEC Linktree](#)

[OUEC WhatsApp Group](#)



Many thanks to all of the members, new and old. We look forward to seeing you tomorrow!

Matthew Buckley, Chairman

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Our mailing address is:

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Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project – looking for a Team Member!

The Il Ngwesi Biodiversity Project is a joint Kenyan-UK venture established in 2022. Il Ngwesi is Africa's first fully indigenous and community-owned eco-lodge and community conservation area, established in 1996 in Laikipia County, northern Kenya. Home of a wonderful Laikipiak Maasai community, who comprise half of our core team members, Il Ngwesi supports a diverse array of fauna including elephants, giraffes, leopards and rhinos, as well as abundant insects, reptiles, grasses and shrubs. Il Ngwesi's eco-lodge is truly world-class and has won multiple awards since its inception; it is seen as a true model for conservation that has inspired community conservancy and eco-lodge models across the region.



Our goal is to establish Il Ngwesi's scientific research programme. Our core research question is to quantify the differences in biodiversity between Il Ngwesi's core conservation area, grazing blocks and settlement areas. In the settlement areas, livestock are free to graze year-round, while grazing blocks forming the bulk of the reserve are opened in the dry season when fodder is scarce. The core conservation area is reserved for wildlife. We aim to quantify the biodiversity differences between these zones, focusing on select groups of insects, plants and birds, ideally including mammals if we are able. Last year, we raised over £11,000 to support an initial team mission in August/September 2023, where the team met, honed our research question to ensure it truly meets the needs of Il Ngwesi and its community, trialled potential research methods, met with various stakeholders and potential collaborators in the conservation landscape both in Laikipia County and nationally, and engaged in an amazing cultural exchange. We are now preparing (fundraising, logistics, refining methods etc) for a 2-month dry season biodiversity survey for ~August/September 2024, with plans for a wet season survey in May 2025 if things go well!

We are looking for an adventurous, dedicated individual to join our team, supporting our efforts to deliver a biodiversity survey with Il Ngwesi. Imagine us a “start-up” conservation project, so you will be expected and encouraged to contribute to a diverse array of actions within the team where needed, although each team member has their specialisms.

Criteria:

Essential (We encourage applicants even if you do not meet every single “essential” criteria and will be flexible based on the candidate!)

- Enthusiasm for conservation
- Ability to work in a team (with half our team being in Kenya!)
- Organisation and time management
- Writing ability - for fundraising and communication purposes, as well as to take good notes for the team (e.g. during meetings) and produce concise summaries - please provide examples
- Cultural awareness
- Experience using GIS Software, preferably QGIS, to make maps (if applicable, please show examples of maps you have made)
- Data analysis skills
- Fieldwork experience
- Fluency in English and the ability or willingness to learn Swahili and Maasai (resources will be provided)
- Not a strict vegan (Dairy and meat products are essential in the Maasai way of life and it would be logistically extremely difficult to cater for a strict vegan who is unwilling to be dietarily flexible – sorry!)
- **Availability next summer (most likely August/September 2024) for the biodiversity survey and beyond (e.g. potentially May 2025 for wet season survey). Availability for August/September 2024 is the most important for us!**

Desirable

- First-aid trained (for remote areas ideal)
- Species identification skills
- Fundraising experience - give examples
- Experience in Kenya / East Africa / Africa (in order of preference)
- Experience in biodiversity surveying (please state which taxa and where)
- Graphic design (e.g. Canva) - show examples if applicable
- Experience in social media marketing
- An aptitude for language learning

To apply, please email by Sunday 17th December to Barbara Francik and Jamie Bolam at

:

- Your CV (2 pages maximum)
- A 1-page cover letter detailing why you believe you would be a superb team member

We will be in touch with promising candidates to arrange interviews via Whatsapp/Zoom etc within a few weeks. We will aim to respond to all enquiries with due diligence and respect, but if you do not hear back from us by late December/early January, please assume your application has unfortunately been unsuccessful. We are looking for a team member ASAP. We will do our best to support you and bring you up to speed and make you feel like a valued team member from day 1 of joining the team.

Ashe o'leng! (Thank you in Maa)