



EL KARAMA LODGE
L A I K I P I A

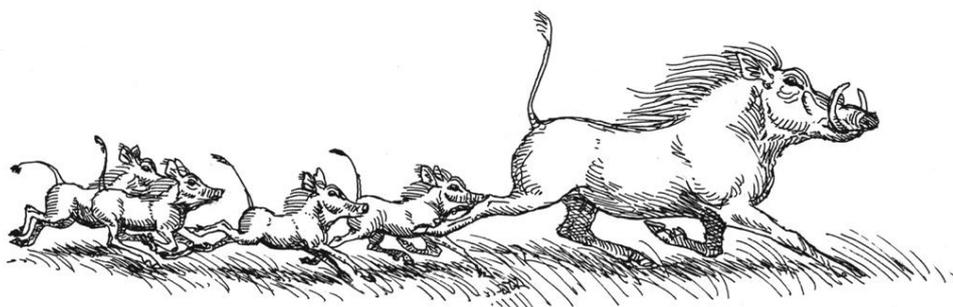
CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

Explore • Engage • Make a change



Our belief is that it will be through engagement, inspiration and connection that our guests can contribute to the health of this ecosystem; ensuring that the type of eco-tourism we offer is balanced in giving back more than it takes away from the environment in which we live.

To that end we have created a few mutually beneficial ways for our guests to get involved, in a meaningful way, in the working life of the ranch and its wildlife protection and monitoring activities.





Wildlife monitoring ranger walks

For the more adventurous and curious travellers who want to learn more about what it means to be an anti-poaching ranger, we can offer a longer walking opportunity for guests to accompany the ranger foot patrol on El Karama. Following the armed, paramilitary anti-poaching unit and in the company of a knowledgeable guide from the lodge, guests will learn about wildlife monitoring, game counts, de-snaring and tracking for signs of unusual activity, setting camera traps in the bush for monitoring purposes, understanding more about the botany, geology and entomology of the region and how this feeds into the natural health of soil and the environment.

Guests for this activity can walk for half a day or even a full day with bush meal breaks at intervals. Suited to active adults and young adults only. This is not suitable for children because of the distance, terrain and higher level of risk from dangerous game.

Wildlife protection rangers in Africa have an incredibly challenging and difficult job to do and interaction with our lodge guests can be morale boosting in many ways, so the benefits of this activity are both direct and indirect; the more the guests understand this the better – they can learn from each other – interaction is key!

Tips: Perfect for 4-5 night stays, for conscious, curious guests, this activity can be tagged onto fly camping, just ask and we can explain the details!

Predator identification programme

This is aimed at those who have a keen eye and a good camera! We have two relatively stable prides of lion, several resident leopards and regular cheetah sightings on El Karama, making game viewings extremely productive and exciting.

Although we do not collar lion on this property, because we prefer to collect research results through minimal direct interference from humans, we do observe, monitor and collate information on individuals through our wildlife security and tourism operations. But a lot of the best information on predators can come from our guests on game drives who travel with good quality cameras.

This activity can be done from the vehicles by all age groups including children who have their own cameras! Guests are offered a mini training by guides beforehand on how to identify predators, and are then given a laminated reminder sheet of the main techniques. They are asked to photograph any predators from certain angles to best show their identifying features. These photos are then shared with our office team and used for identification and saved into files which we share with our expert colleagues, who are mapping the activity and territories of predators in Laikipia.

Tips: Perfect for adults or families interested in helping to collate information, photographing with a purpose, and generally assisting our teams by feeding visual ID photos into our systems. These will be shared on a regional level to better understand the species and how to mitigate human-wildlife conflict.





Tracking, cast making and camera traps for kids and young adults

As an add-on to Bush School, our unique kids club at the lodge, this activity is aimed at children between 8 and 16 years of age. Using a combination of vehicles and getting out on foot with our guides, young guests can learn about how to track animals, make plaster casts records of interesting tracks and how to set up and check camera traps in the wild for monitoring purposes.

The location of good tracks will be recorded and can be used in territorial mapping for certain species to help us understand where they are and why.

Tips: Perfect for our 4-night family safaris with young adults.

The Shamba/tree planting

The owners at El Karama Lodge, Sophie and Murray Grant, are passionate about trees and they are beginning to put together a small tree nursery for the acacia nilotica and other indigenous varieties to help mitigate the ravaging effects of elephant on the trees in this eco system.

Guests who like to get their hands dirty can come to the organic garden and help us plant, propagate and re-locate tree seedlings inside the lodge compound and other exclusion zones to help us with our long term plans to reduce deforestation. We have calculated that we lose four trees a month at least to elephant damage, so we aim to plant double that amount every month throughout the green seasons - when the rainfall will allow us to establish these young seedlings. We are beginning within the fenced environments that can act as exclusion zones, and will later develop beyond those areas.

Set inside the organic garden this seedling project will also include garden tours where we physically show children and guests how we grow our own vegetables using drip irrigation, slurry from the dairy and absolutely no chemicals or pesticides. Great fun in the sun for the whole family including gardening tools and baskets for collection; we hope that activities such as this will inspire and encourage our guests to take some of these ideas home.

Tips: Perfect for small children and families who like to get involved interactively and who don't mind a bit of physical work! Taking place inside our inspiring organic garden where we grow 90 percent of all the lodge and staff fresh vegetables, the seedling project is brand new!



CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF EL KARAMA:

(available at advance request at additional price):



Mt Kenya Horse Patrol Team

Mount Kenya Trust is involved in protecting and conserving the Mount Kenya ecosystem. By training and motivating rangers on the ground, this organisation uses horse patrols to keep on top of poaching and other human/wildlife issues.

Guests can take a 2-3-hour horse ride with the Mount Kenya ranger patrol in the foothills, learning about their amazing work in a stunning landscape.

Charges cover a donation to the Mt Kenya Trust and entrance fees to Mount Kenya National Park. A packed lunch will be prepared by the lodge and sent with you free of charge, unless guests prefer a later lunch in a local restraint in Nanyuki which is also lovely.

Tips: Perfect for long stay guests of 4-5 nights, gives a new dimension to their views of the Mount Kenya from the ranch and appeals to those who like to ride horses/ponies. Extra charges for transport, entrance and donation to MKTE do apply.

Reteti Elephant Sanctuary

Only a quick fixed-wing or helicopter flight from El Karama Lodge, this incredible elephant rescue and rehabilitation project is the brainchild of the Namunyak Community and co-Founder Katie Rowe. Located in the breathtaking mountains of the Matthew's Range, North Kenya, guests can fly with the region's most expert pilots over Laikipia and into North Kenya, seeing magnificent landscapes and eco system changes as they go. On arrival guests will meet the orphaned elephants and their carers and learn more about why this operation is necessary and what it is doing to protect and support both wildlife, people and habitat in the region.

Tips: Excellent option for clients with a more flexible budget who want a unique half-day trip doing something meaningful that builds capacity within a community and assists the wildlife authorities to protect wildlife in marginal environments. Entry, donation and transport costs do apply. Please note private visits are an option, just let us know and we can quote to you accordingly.

