



Sebastian Wins *Conde Nast* Traveler “World Savers” Award

Sebastian Chuwa has received an Environmental Award from *Conde Nast Traveler* magazine (see Nov/06 issue, pg. 223), placing as a runner-up along with three other environmentalists for his tree planting and educational work for the conservation of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

These environmentalists have been dubbed as “World Savers” by the magazine, which for the past 17 years has celebrated “an unsung few who are fighting to safeguard some of the globe’s most spectacular destinations, which for these heroes also happen to be home. Thanks to the tireless efforts of these individuals, and to their achievements in the face of formidable opposition, the natural treasures that they are protecting are safe for now. For that, we salute them.”

The first place winner was Marina Rikhvanova, a Russian biologist working to preserve Lake Baikal, the world’s oldest and deepest lake. *Conde Nast Traveler* features articles on worldwide travel destinations, publishing related information about art, architecture, fashion, culture, food, and shopping.

With the cash award from this prize, Sebastian plans to build a tree nursery to raise coffee, mpingo, and hardwood trees for reforesting Kilimanjaro.

We thank the staff of *Conde Nast* for this invaluable support and recognition for those who consider it a life priority to work for the preservation of our precious planet earth and its resources.

Traveling to Tanzania

In September of this year, we (James Harris and Bette Stockbauer), along with Bette’s brother, Roger, and his son Marc, traveled to Africa, spending 5 weeks in Tanzania. Roger and Marc successfully climbed Mt. Kiliman-



Our group at Osunyai Safari Camp, just outside of Tarangire National Park in Masai lands, with the Wildlife Explorer camp crew and safari tent at the far left. In the back row from the left are: James, Abraham, Kimani, Nenry, Sebastian, Elizabeth, Hendry, Mustafa, Naftal, Marc, Roger. In the front row are: Noel, Bette, Julius. October 7, 2006.

jaro, a longtime dream for both of them.

Bette and James stayed with Sebastian Chuwa and his wife, Elizabeth, where they live on Kilimanjaro at about a mile in altitude. It was amazing to walk on the roads of the mountain in this area, as everywhere you looked there were banana and coffee plots, interplanted with beans, corn and other vegetables. Taller hardwood trees, such as avocado and wild fig, were interspersed with these agricultural crops. Irrigation ditches, skillfully laid out, channeled water to all these little farms. Sebastian and Elizabeth own several acres planted in such crops and also raise cows, pigs and goats.

Also, we had the opportunity to visit many of the people with whom they have worked for the past ten years — the Mpingo Women’s Group in Kikavu Chini, the Green Garden group in Moshi, and the Kibosho East Environmental Group. We also talked at length with Sebastian about the ABCP, mapping out a future direction for our work.

The trip included a journey to Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar, where we stayed with relatives of Sebastian and Elizabeth and toured historical sites.

During the last week we took a safari to four national parks. These tours showed us the immense diversity and beauty of the country and gave us a true appreciation of its wonders. You can view our photo journal online at: www.ornamentaltur.com/safarigallery/index.html.

Wildlife Explorer

A highlight of our trip was an absolutely stunning journey to view wildlife in the National Parks of Tarangire, Lake



Manyara, Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti. Gary and Jo Strand, Sebastian's employers, who run the tour company, Wildlife Explorer, provided us with a vehicle and camping accommodations to make this trip an unforgettable experience.

Tanzania has one of the largest remaining populations of wild animals on the continent and we were able to view them at length in these magical places. We photographed lion, cheetah, giraffe, elephant, zebra, wildebeest, hippos, impala, topi, and many other animals. We also saw mpingo habitat and learned first-hand about its difficulties surviving in the wild. It was a truly astounding experience to be traveling every day through wild lands inhabited by such magnificent flora and fauna, and renewed our dedication to supporting the cause of conservation in Tanzania.

Thank you Gary and Jo for memories that will stay in our hearts forever.

Environment Day 2006

Each year in September, teachers and students in Kilimanjaro Region organize activities for the celebration of



At Environment Day celebrations at Singachini Teacher's College in Moshi, students hold a "Tree of Life" mpingo statue atop an elephant carved from jacaranda wood. This was received by James and Bette in trust for the ABCP and all who have supported its environmental conservation efforts in Tanzania. September 30, 2006.

Environment Day. This year it was held at Singachini Teacher's College in

Moshi. The event brings together community members interested in protection and promotion of environmental concerns, presenting a program that encourages a right relationship to nature.

This year Bette and James were honored as special guests because of their work on behalf of communities in Kilimanjaro area. They were presented with a magnificently carved sculpture executed in jacaranda and mpingo.

A book written about earlier Environmental Day ceremonies in Kibosho East is posted on our website at: www.blackwoodconservation.org/kibosho_east.html.

New England Biolabs Funds Green Garden Women's Group

New England Biolabs Foundation has funded projects for several of our affiliated women's groups and this year they have awarded a grant to the Green Garden Women's Group (GGWG) in Moshi to expand their mpingo nursery and start replanting projects at new locations, Machame Shari and Usa River, west of Moshi. The women will also



Sixtus Koromba leads the Kibosho East Environmental Singers from Sungu in the performance of a song he created to inspire conservation awareness called "Green is Beauty" at Environment Day Ceremonies at Singachini Teacher's College. Sept. 30, 2006.



Bette and Sebastian visit with Glory, Salama and Linna of the Green Garden Women's Group at their nursery plot at Mweka. Inset shows Linna, Glory, Bette, and Salama with a concrete giraffe sculpture in front of the plot. September 17, 2006.

start a small-scale poultry project and purchase school supplies for AIDS orphans in their community.

The GGWG has been a strong force for promoting conservation in the Moshi/Kilimanjaro area for 8 years. The women run a commercial nursery in Moshi and regularly contribute trees to surrounding communities for environmental conservation. They are known in Moshi for their expertise in building a variety of energy efficient stoves, particularly for institutional use. They hold instructional classes on tree planting and conservation, and have sensitized their community to the importance of mpingo.

On our trip, Linna Komba, Salama Lema, and Glory Mamkwe, group leaders, treated us to a lunch of traditional Tanzanian food, and then conducted a tour of their nurseries, their stove demonstration hut, and some of their income earning projects.

Cottonwood Foundation Builds New Nursery at MMP

Since 2002, when he received the Rolex Award, Sebastian's work for mpingo conservation has expanded

greatly, and he is receiving an increasing number of requests for mpingo seedlings. In order to take advantage of the increased demand, the Cottonwood Foundation has awarded funding to the ABCP to build a new 50,000 seedling nursery shelter at the Moshi Mpingo Plot (MMP). Because of this, 100,000 plants can now be distributed every 18 months.

The MMP was established in 1996. In addition to a nursery, rows of orchard trees were planted for scientific observation. These trees are now mature enough to produce seeds and our nursery attendant is carefully collecting them to germinate new seedlings. This is advantageous for the project, because the cost of seeds is high and there is difficulty of access when gathering them in the wild.

The permanent building funded earlier by Cottonwood has been very useful for workers when they are producing large numbers of seedlings which must be planted in a narrow window of time. Travel in the local area is difficult and the accommodations (with kitchen, living, and bathroom facilities) allow workers to stay overnight and thus use their time more efficiently.

New Acreage at MMP

Because of the work done by Sebastian and the ABCP for conservation and youth education, he has been awarded an additional acre of land adjoining the present Moshi Mpingo Plot for conservation use by local village authorities.

Preliminary plans are to use part of this acreage to influence people to include the use of mpingo trees in intensive agriculture. Approximately 1000 mpingo trees will be planted and each row of trees will be interplanted with food crops such as maize and beans to demonstrate intercropping and the uses of mpingo as a multi-purpose tree. As a legume, mpingo will enrich the soil and add nutrients for the vegetable crops. It will also provide shade for crops that have limited sun tolerance.

Kikavu Chini Update

During our stay we also traveled to Kikavu Chini to meet with members of the Mpingo Women's Group, which has been funded, through the ABCP, by New England Biolabs Foundation. NEBF awarded them money for starting a tree nursery, a bee-keeping operation, and a poultry project. All of these enterprises are helping the members and the community in significant ways.

Each year the women supply the township with thousands of trees that are planted in Kikavu Chini for community improvement. Since beginning with 6 beehives they are now carrying on a significant bee-keeping operation with 33 active beehives. Their poultry project



Anna Mvungi (standing), chairperson of the Mpingo Women's Group, with group members during our meeting to visit their projects. September 10, 2006.

is supplying them with funds to farm a large acreage given for their use by the local government.

We spent the day with this group, and drove to their various projects. Their love for the environment has been a significant factor in influencing conservation activities in their community.

Rolex Landcruiser

In 2002 Sebastian won an Associate Laureate prize from the Rolex Awards for Enterprise. With a portion of that funding he was able to purchase a Toyota Landcruiser. During our stay in Tanzania we were able to witness the significance of this vehicle for his conservation work. From where Sebastian lives, it is a walk of several miles to the nearest bus stop. Even so, many of the schools where he works are not even accessible by bus. Renting a car is very expensive and still involves a large usage of time to access the vehicle.

The Landcruiser has changed his life significantly, allowing him freedom of movement and ability to transport people, educational materials, tools, and seedlings with ease. Once again, we gratefully extend our thanks to Rolex.

KEEG and EcoVentures

Last year in this newsletter we included an article about the Kibosho East Environmental Group (KEEG), an energetic tree planting group that is working in close association with Sebastian Chuwa in protecting the environment and developing environmentally friendly products to sell, such as disease resistant coffee trees for area farmers.

This year, through an application submitted by the ABCP, they received funding, to build a new nursery and fence their plot, from EcoVentures International (EVI).

The objective of EVI is to “support environmental entrepreneurship and the development of micro and small enterprises that...provide environmental products and services to enhance and protect local resources.”

While in Tanzania, we met with members of the KEEG and toured their nursery facility, which is only a short



John Ngoti, Chairperson of the Kilimanjaro Environmental Education Group (KEEG), salutes the supporters of the ABCP in front of Mt. Kilimanjaro. September 11, 2006.

walk from Sebastian’s home. Led by John Ngoti, members have been able to increase personal income and work closely with Sebastian in developing new projects for environmental conservation on Mt. Kilimanjaro. Several years ago they became local heroes when they prevented a dangerous forest fire from destroying community habitation.

Disease Resistant Coffee Plants for Kilimanjaro Farmers

Although a primary focus of the ABCP is the work of mpingo conservation, through the years it has sponsored tree planting initiatives for a large variety of species that improve the daily lives of the people, as well as some self-help initiatives to increase monetary income. We fervently believe that poverty is a primary cause of environmental destruction and that helping people meet their subsistence needs advances the cause of conservation.

One initiative that we are now supporting is the supplying of disease resistant coffee plants to the farmers of Mt. Kilimanjaro, many of whom are growing coffee on their home farms. Since the 1960’s the area has been plagued by Coffee Berry Disease, a fungus that attacks the young coffee berries and dries them up before maturity.

In order to find remedies for this disease, Sebastian has been consulting with the personnel of the Tanzania Coffee Research Institute (TACRI) in Lya-



Members of the KEEG filling nursery pots with forest soil. Each shelter such as they are working in can hold approximately 3500 seedlings, and they are working on creating 12 shelter areas in their plot on Mt. Kilimanjaro. September 11, 2006.

mpingo. This research team has developed new Arabica seedlings that are resistant to Coffee Berry Disease and is leading a national campaign to boost coffee production by replacing disease-prone plants all over Tanzania, an estimated 200,000,000 in number.

In his own nursery Sebastian is experimenting with germination, grafting, and planting techniques that will supply coffee farmers with the new varieties.

Sebastian estimates that only one percent of Kilimanjaro coffee farmers are currently growing resistant varieties, and that about 1,200,000 plants could be replaced or added in his area in order to give the farmers better crops.



Elephants feed on trees such as acacia and mpingo in Tarangire National Park.

Mpingo in Tarangire

In Africa, we traveled through many areas that underscored for us once more the intricate balance between needs of the human population and those of the animals and plants of the natural world. These experiences precisely highlighted for us the necessity for replanting programs for mpingo. One such area was Tarangire National Park.

This park once had 60% tree cover but that has now been reduced to about 15% because of overuse by elephant herds. Historically, the elephants of Tarangire migrated north yearly to the Masai Mara area but that migration corridor has been cut off because of fencing and agricultural use of land.

Since they can no longer migrate, they now reside in Tarangire year round, at the expense of vegetation within that ecosystem. Many animals find the leaves of mpingo sweet and nutritious and elephants are no exception. We saw many

trees that had obviously been topped off multiple times by hungry elephants. ABCP planting programs are involving many people in planting mpingo in places where they can be watched, cared for, and protected from hungry animals.

Mwenge and Moshi Carvers

On our trip, we visited two carving cooperatives, one in Moshi and the world famous Mwenge Cooperative in Dar es Salaam. At both markets we were able to watch carvers at work, using only hand tools. Thinking of our shop at home, filled with the electric tools we use to execute our own woodworking, we were amazed at the skill, imagination, and hard work invested in their art.

We also visited the Cultural Heritage Center in Arusha, which has a magnificent display of carvings and is supporting the work of mpingo conservation. Their new facility, boldly designed as a drum and indigenous shield, will be completed soon. The center celebrates the cultural diversity of Tanzania and sells the local art of many of its peoples.

PayPal & Videos

For the convenience of our contributors, the ABCP website now has an option to make a donation using PayPal.

Tree of Music and Conservation/



Sebastian prepares to crush plant material with a mortar and pestle to use in his organic plant insect repellent and fertilizer. By blending Tephrosia and wild marigold plants with a livestock manure tea and clay from termite mounds, he has developed a spray for garden and agricultural crops and trees that repels harmful insects and also acts as a fertilizer for the plants.

Education Work of Sebastian Chuwa videos are still available and may also be ordered with a PayPal payment option. Please check the homepage for links to these features.



A wood carver works behind shelves of mpingo and other carvings at the Muungano Makonde Carvers Market in Moshi. September 15, 2006.



Mpingo tree growing in the open grasslands north of Makuyuni between Tarangire and Ngorongoro Crater National Parks.

Give a Living Christmas Gift by Planting Mpingo Trees From The Good Gifts Catalog!

Are you tired of giving gifts that you strongly suspect will end up in someone's attic or on a shelf at Goodwill? Would you like your gift to have an impact on someone's life? Good Gifts Catalog is a charitable organization that gives you an opportunity to give a gift that will truly make a difference, as every gift among its offerings goes to a person or cause that will lift someone out of poverty, help the environment, or address a pressing social issue.

This year you can give a gift of mpingo saplings for Christmas or another occasion, because the ABCP is fortunate indeed to have been chosen for inclusion in the Good Gifts Catalog. For information on the catalog see www.goodgifts.org/goodgifts/. The URL for the ABCP offering is: www.goodgifts.org/goodgifts/default.php?cPath=75&sort=1a&page=4. Click on 6026 and 6027 "Plant bagpipe saplings".

"I want to encourage you to support campaigns to save African forests and biodiversity. The importance of forests and the many services humanity gets from them is well known: ecological balance of the earth; they absorb carbon; prevent loss of soil and subsequent desertification; they offer safeguards against flooding; they are reservoirs for genetic resources; they control rainfall patterns and serve as catchment areas for freshwater and rivers. Forests have been a source of wealth and inspiration throughout centuries."

**—Waangari Maathai, Kenya
Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 2004**

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African Blackwood Conservation Project

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