

WANDER to WONDER

**THIS EDITION:
Mombasa, Kenya**

**Volume 22
June 2018**

WANDER to WONDER

by MARTINA NICOLLS



**The world will never starve for wonder, but only for want of wonder.
G.K. Chesterson**



Copyright. Martina Nicolls 2018

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the author. All photographs are by Martina Nicolls.

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE.....	4
MAPS.....	5
GETTING TO MOMBASA.....	7
MOMBASA.....	9
MOMBASA TUSKS	10
MOMBASA MARKET & SPICES	11
FORT JESUS.....	15
OMANI DOORS	21
CHINESE PORCELAIN ARTEFACTS	23
OLD PORT.....	25
OLD TOWN.....	29
BEACH	33
THE AUTHOR: MARTINA NICOLLS.....	39



editor's note

Welcome to the 22nd edition of WANDER to WONDER

This edition of Wander to Wonder focuses on the old port city of Mombasa in Kenya.

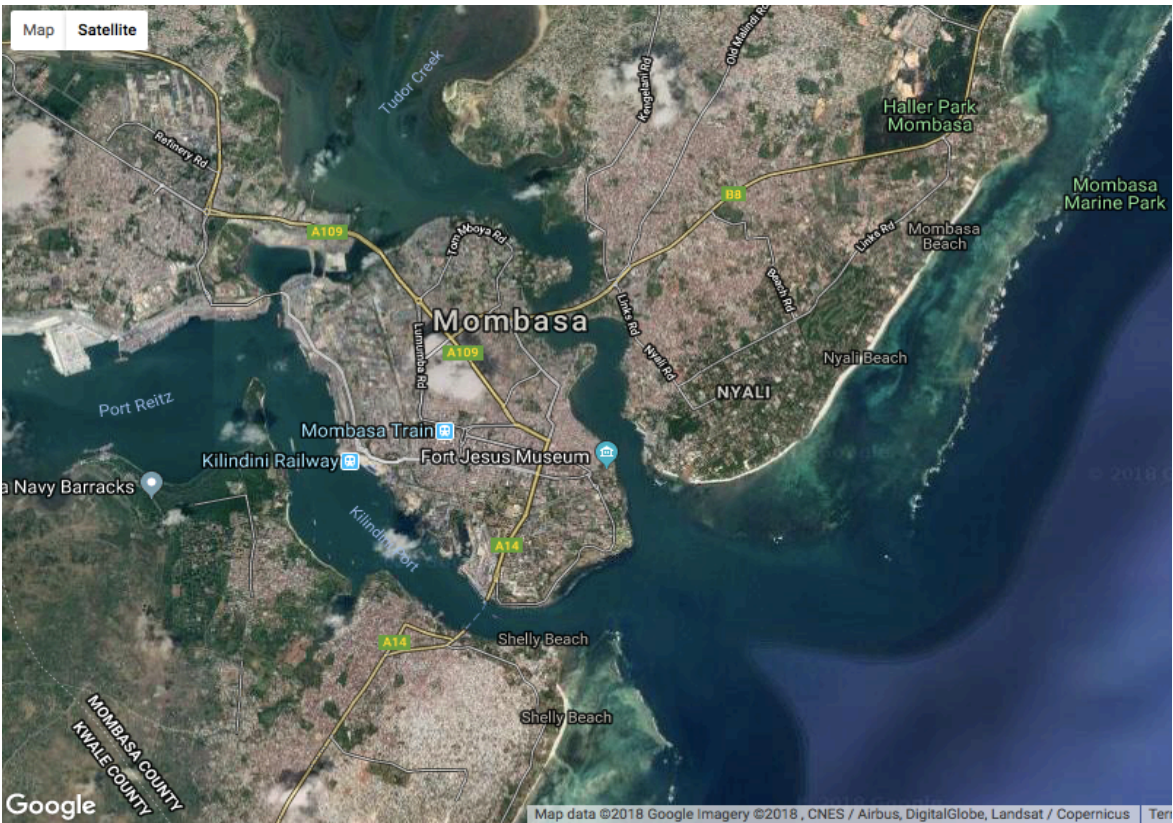
Until next edition, with another theme,

Martina

MARTINA NICOLLS



maps





getting to mombasa

Mombasa is 480 kilometres (300 miles) southeast of the capital of Kenya, Nairobi. Mombasa can be reached by road, train, or plane.

The train, the Madaraka Express, departs Nairobi at 8:00 am and arrives in Mombasa at 1:55 pm, at a cost of Kenyan Shillings 3000 first class (USD\$30) or KES 1000 second class (USD\$10). The return trip departs Mombasa at 7:15 am and arrives in Nairobi at 1:05 pm.

The British commenced construction in 1886 on the Uganda Railway in the British East Africa Protectorate to connect Lake Victoria to the sea port. In 1893 construction began on the Mombasa to Nairobi rail line, that opened up the nation that is now Kenya (named after Mt Kenya in 1920, and independent since 1963; Uganda gained independence in 1962). A new line, running parallel to the old rail line, updated the rail service, and was launched in 2017 as the Madaraka Express.





mombasa

Mombasa is the second largest city in Kenya (after its capital, Nairobi). It is the nation's chief port, and a major sea port for the continent of Africa. Mombasa is an island on Kenya's coast, the gateway to the Indian Ocean.

The Bantu people originally inhabited Mombasa, which became an Arab trading location in the 8th century until the 18th century. The first Europeans to land in Mombasa were lead by the Portuguese navigator and explorer, Vasco da Gama, in 1498. They soon departed after encountering hostility. The Portuguese eventually controlled Mombasa from 1529 to 1698, building the Fort Jesus. In 1698 a three-year war between the Arabs and the Portuguese ended with the expulsion of the Portuguese. In the 18th century, the Portuguese returned to Mombasa and held it again, briefly, before it was governed by Oman. In 1887 the British ruled Mombasa, which became the capital of the British East Africa Protectorate until 1907.

Today Mombasa has a population of about 900,000 inhabitants. The main attractions in Mombasa are Fort Jesus, the old town, the old port, the markets, the Mombasa Marine Park (a national reserve built in 1986), and the Shimba Hills National Reserve (accommodating lots of elephants).



mombasa tusks

The Mombasa tusks, located in Moi Avenue in the middle of the city, are a memorial to commemorate the visit of British Queen Elizabeth to Mombasa in 1952.



mombasa market & spices









fort jesus

The Portuguese built Fort Jesus in Mombasa in 1593 as a military base. The Fort was constructed in the shape of a cross, and hence the Portuguese called it Fort Jesus.

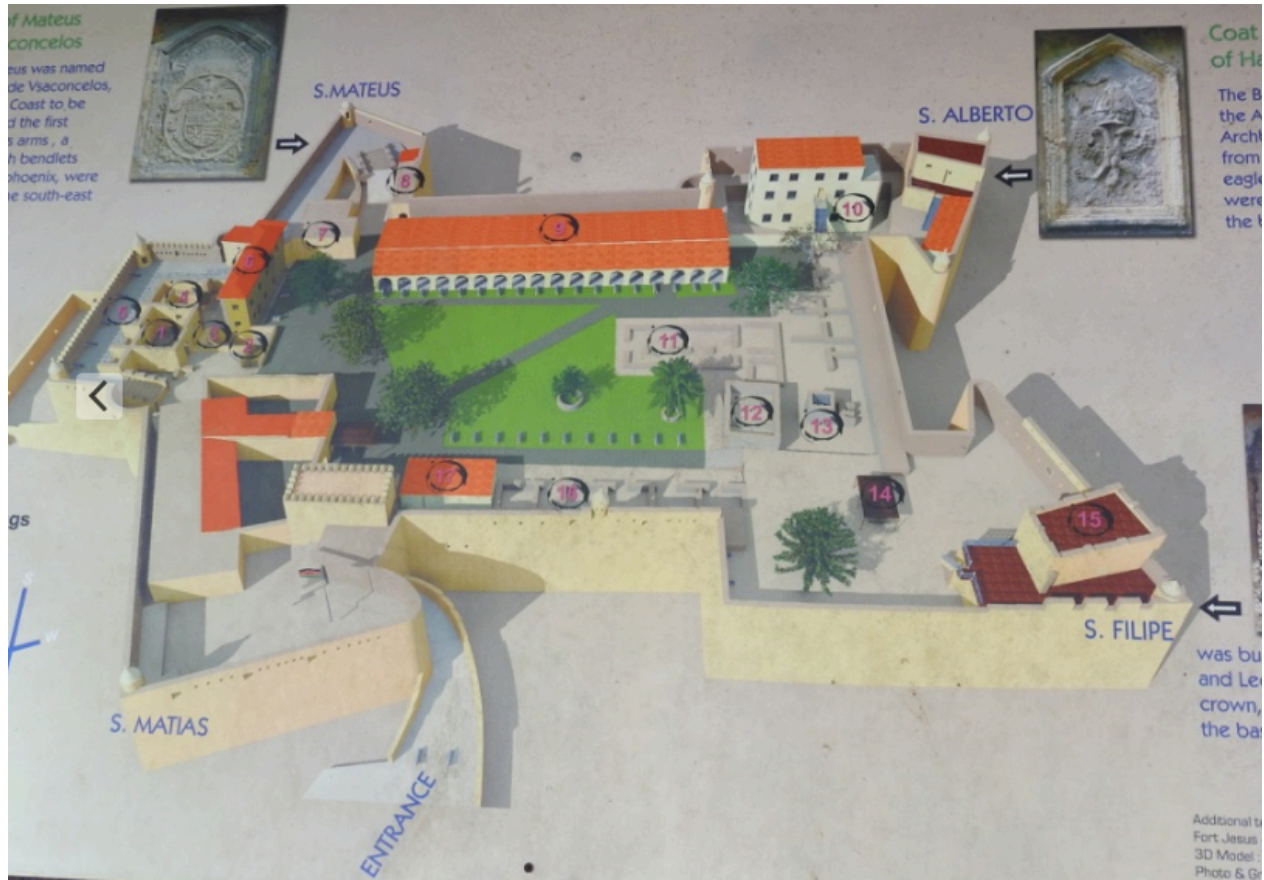
In 1661 Bantu leaders travelled to Oman to seek military assistance from Oman authorities to help expel the Portuguese from Mombasa. The Oman Naval and Land Forces led the siege to oust the Portuguese in 1696. After 2 years and 9 months Fort Jesus was captured during the reign of the Omani Imam Saif bin Sultan Al-Yarubi (1692-1711), known as Qaid Al-Ardh. The Omanis then increased the height of the outer walls for more protection.

In 1824 the Oman leaders asked Captain Owen of the British Royal Navy for protection in an attempt at independency. Two years later the British protection officially withdrew from Mombasa, and in 1828 Oman regained full control of Fort Jesus.

From 1895 to 1958 Fort Jesus became a government prison. In 1960 the museum was established and Fort Jesus was opened to the public as a historical monument. From May 2016 to February 2017 the Oman government (through the National Records and Archives Authority in coordination with Kenya's Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Arts) improved and renovated the area.













omani doors

The Omanis captured Fort Jesus from the Portuguese in 1698. In the fort, there are a number of Omani doors still intact. After the 1850s, Omani doors were very common in Mombasa, and their incurved inscriptions were usually replaced by floral patterns. Later the step of the door had various designs and the palmetto patterns were also replaced with floral designs.

Omani doors have a thick square-shaped frame with a square-shaped crown and two shutters with a central pillar installed in one of the two shutters. Omani doors of east Africa were tall and designed to be opened toward the interior, in keeping with the doors in some Omani towns like Sur and Muscat. The most common designs of Omani doors are flowers, chains, twisting lines, lotus flowers, rope, and palm trees. Some doors have verses from the Holy Quran or Arabic poems.



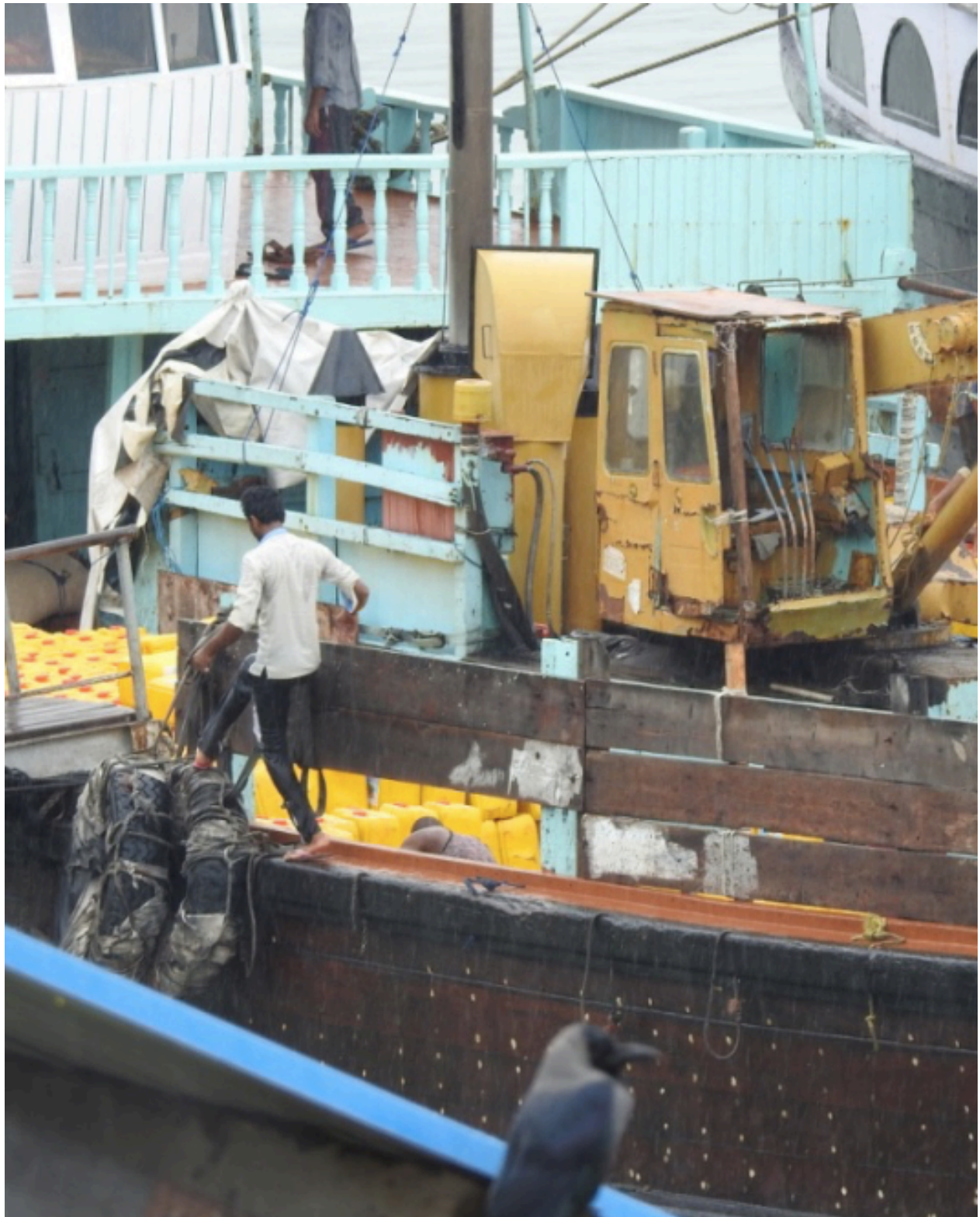


chinese porcelain artefacts





old port









old town





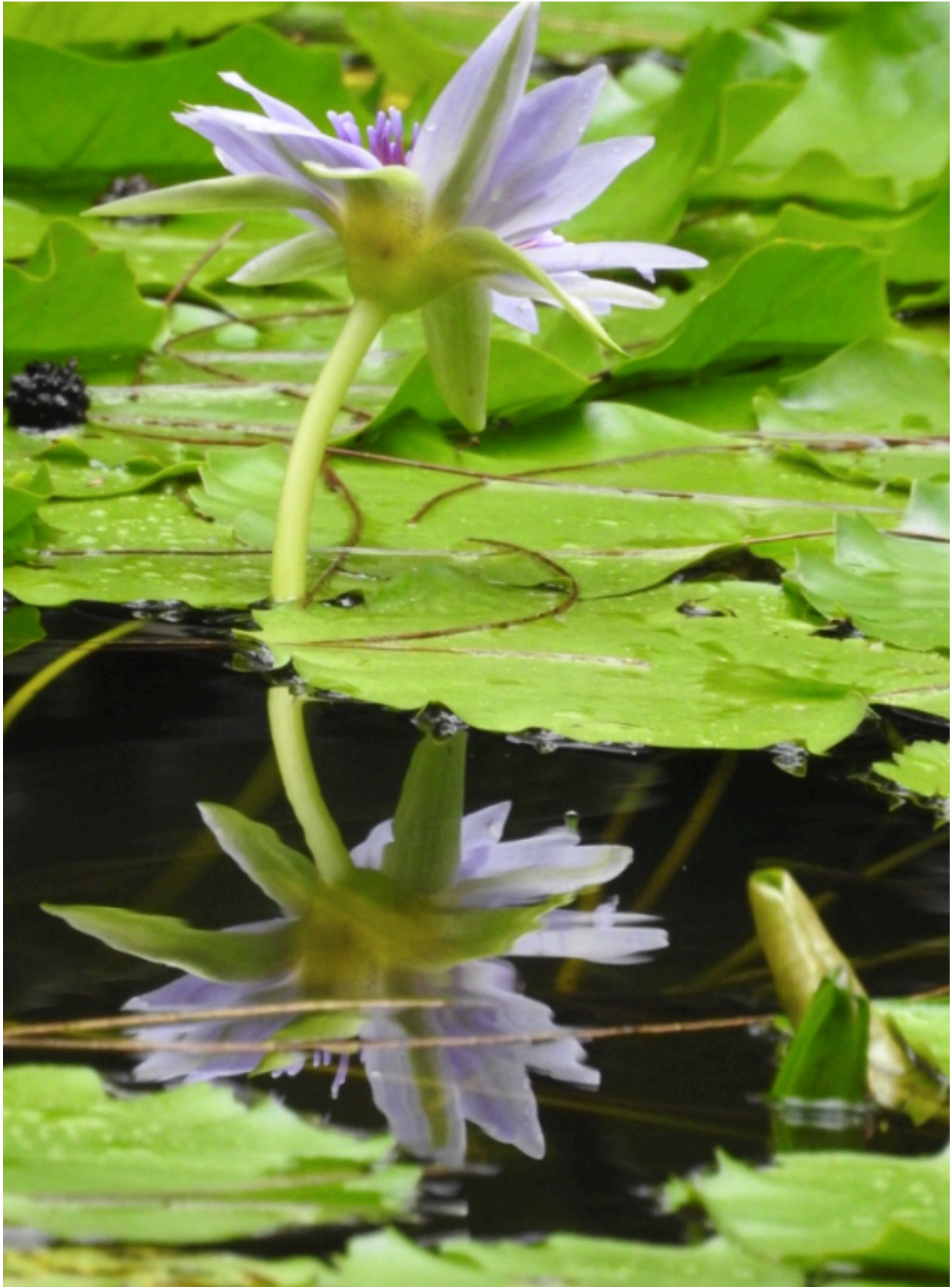




beach













the author: Martina Nicolls

I am an author and humanitarian aid consultant with over 30 years' experience in the management, implementation, and evaluation of international aid development projects, particularly in post-conflict environments and countries with transitional governments, such as Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Darfur, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Pakistan, Iraq, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Georgia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and Sri Lanka, and also Mauritius, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia – and others. I provide technical advice on areas such as peace-building and conflict mitigation, education, poverty reduction, human rights, child labour, data quality and financing models.

But mostly I am a wanderer. Wherever I am and wherever I go, I take photographs and I write. My books include:

Similar but Different in the Animal Kingdom (2017)
A Mongolian Lament (2015)
The Komodo Verses (2012)

Liberia's Deadeast Ends (2012)
Bardot's Comet (2011)
Kashmir on a Knife-Edge (2010)
The Sudan Curse (2009)

MARTINA NICOLLS

martina@iimetro.com.au

<http://www.martinanicolls.net>

<http://martinasblogs.blogspot.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/Martina-Nicolls-მარტინა-ნიკოლსი-1450496988529988/timeline/>







