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**THIS EDITION:
TSAVO, KENYA**

**Volume 17
January 2018**



WANDER to WONDER

by MARTINA NICOLLS



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



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editor's note

Welcome to the 17th edition of WANDER to WONDER

This 17th edition of Wander to Wonder focuses on Kenya's Tsavo National Parks – Tsavo East and Tsavo West.

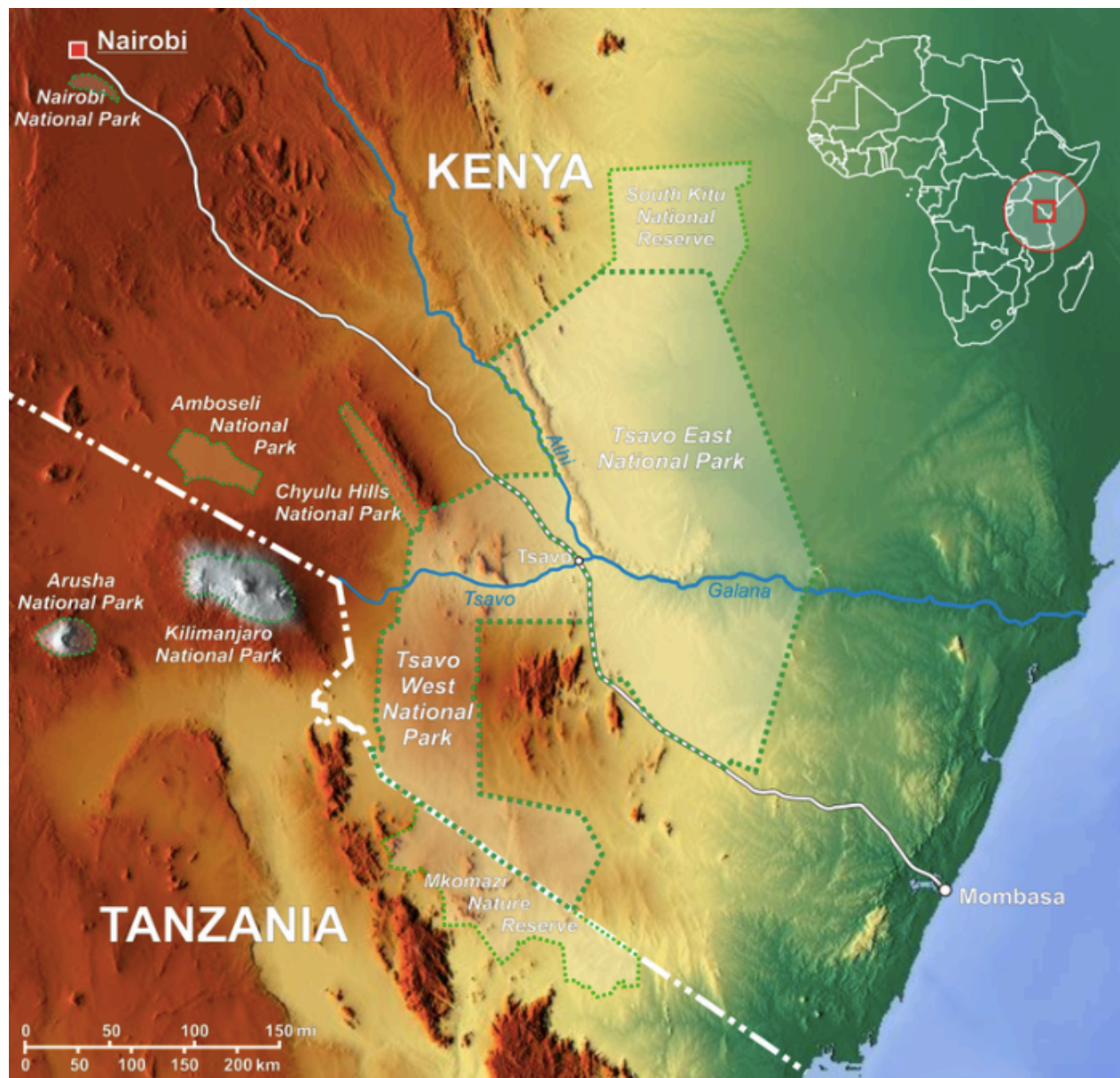
I wish all my readers a wonderful adventurous year in 2018. Until next edition, with another theme,

Martina

MARTINA NICOLLS



maps



Source: Lencer, Tsavo National Park Map en.png, 1 September 2007





tsavo national parks: split in two

Tsavo, opened in 1948, consists of two separate parks: Tsavo East National Park and Tsavo West National Park. Tsavo is situated in the Taita-Taveta County of Kenya, between Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, and Mombasa, a seaside city. It is named after the Tsavo River, which flows west to east.

The area is split into two national parks by the 1898 railway from Mombasa to the interior of Kenya and the A109 highway.

Tsavo is nearly 22,000 square kilometres, and is the largest national park in Kenya. It is also one of the largest national parks in the world.

Tsavo East National Park is one of the oldest parks in Kenya, located in the southeast of the country, near the town of Voi in the Taita-Taveta District of Coast Province. It is 13,747 square kilometres. Tsavo East is generally flat, with dry plains across which the Galana River flows. Features include the Yatta Plateau and Lugards Falls.

Tsavo West National Park covers an area of 9,065 square kilometres. Tsavo West National Park is more mountainous and wetter than Tsavo East, with swamps, Lake Jipe and the Mzima Springs. It is known for bird life and for its large mammals, such as black rhino, buffalo, elephant, leopard, hippo and Masai lion, as well as other smaller animals, such as the bush baby, hartebeest, lesser kudu and Masai giraffe.

Both national parks are noted for their red earth – and red dust.





tsavo east national park

Tsavo East National Park is one of the oldest and largest parks in [Kenya](#). Situated in a semi-arid area previously known as the Taru Desert, it is located near the town of Voi in Taita-Taveta County.

Inside the park, the Athi and Tsavo rivers converge to form the Galana River. Research has shown that late Stone Age archaeological sites are found close to the Galana River.



tsavo west national park

Tsavo West National Park is a more popular destination than Tsavo East National Park due to its magnificent scenery, which is mountainous and rocky.







Lugards falls: Tsavo East

Lugards Falls, named after British soldier and explorer Frederick John Dealtry Lugard (1858-1945), is a series of white water rapids on the Galana River.









mzima springs and falls: Tsavo West

Mzima Springs, situated 48 kilometres from Mtito Andei is in Tsavo West National Park. Tsavo-West is a semi-dry wilderness, so the occurrence of the springs makes it more remarkable – like a desert oasis. Mzima Springs consists of a top pool and a long pool, from which the Mzima River flows to join the Tsavo River seven kilometres away.

Water springs from volcanic rock, after travelling underground from the Chyulu Hills. The volcanic action occurred 10 kilometres away from the source of the springs less than 500 years ago.

The Chyulu Hills are composed mainly of volcanic ash and lava. Due to the porosity of the volcanic rocks, rainfall seeps into the rocks until it comes to the non-porous layer. The water then travels in a stream between the layers of rock to merge into several springs. Mzima is the largest of the springs.

The porous volcanic rock acts like a filter, resulting in clear water. In 1969 an underwater viewing tank was erected in the pool, enabling visitors to see the crystal clear water, fish, and even a crocodile or a hippopotamus, as well as eels and mud-suckers.

On the banks of the springs are papyrus plants, wild date palm trees (*Phoenix reclinata*), raphia palm trees (*Rhaphia faranifera*), and doum palm trees (*Hyphaene coriacea*).

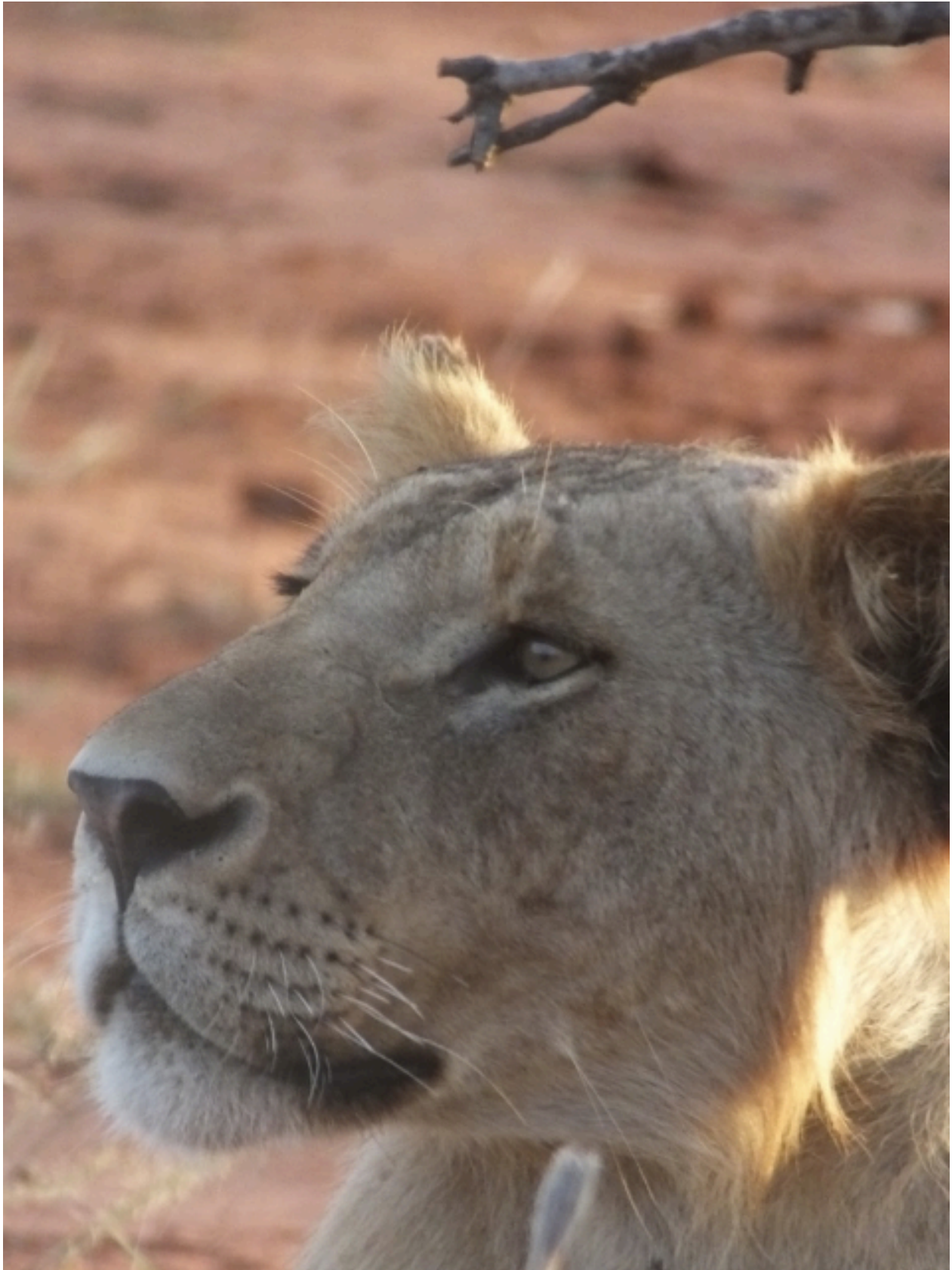




















the author: Martina Nicolls

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)

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