

KARURA FOREST FACTS

- 🌿 Karura gazetted as 1,041 ha National Forest Reserve in 1932
- 🌿 Friends of Karura Community Forest Association (FKF) registered under Kenya Societies Act in 2009
- 🌿 Indigenous forest 257 ha, plantation 461 ha
- 🌿 Joint Management Agreement between FKF and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) signed 2013

KARURA FOREST Integrated Ecological Restoration A Success Story



Friends of Karura Community Forest Association
in partnership with
Kenya Forest Service



FRIENDS OF KARURA COMMUNITY FOREST ASSOCIATION GOALS

- 🌿 Achieve and sustain a well-conserved Karura Forest through stakeholder participation for provision of recreational and ecosystem goods and services for the residents of Nairobi and beyond
- 🌿 Restore Karura Forest to its natural dry highland closed-canopy forest ecosystem



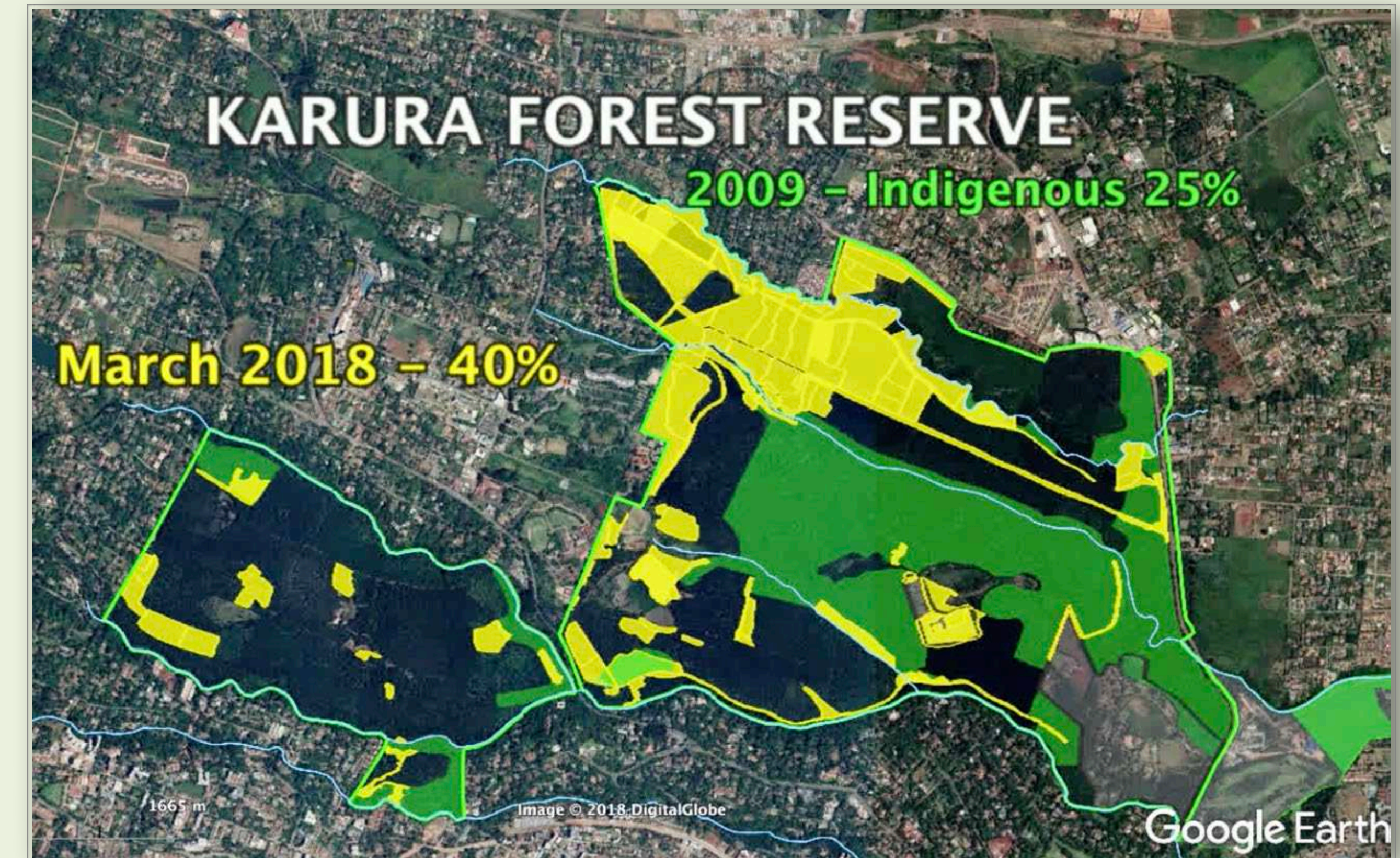
REPLANTING BY COMMUNITIES,
CORPORATIONS & KIDS

RESTORING A HEALTHY FOREST ECOSYSTEM

- Regeneration work began 2010 with removal of exotic invasives, felling of senescent plantations, enrichment planting in old plantation stands and in degraded indigenous areas
- Mid-2018 – 190 ha regenerated with indigenous species

Indigenous areas expanded from 25% to over 40% of forest cover

- Initially seedlings sourced from KFS Karura nursery
- Now sourced from new FKF nursery with capacity for 120,000 seedlings, currently of 40 species of indigenous trees and shrubs



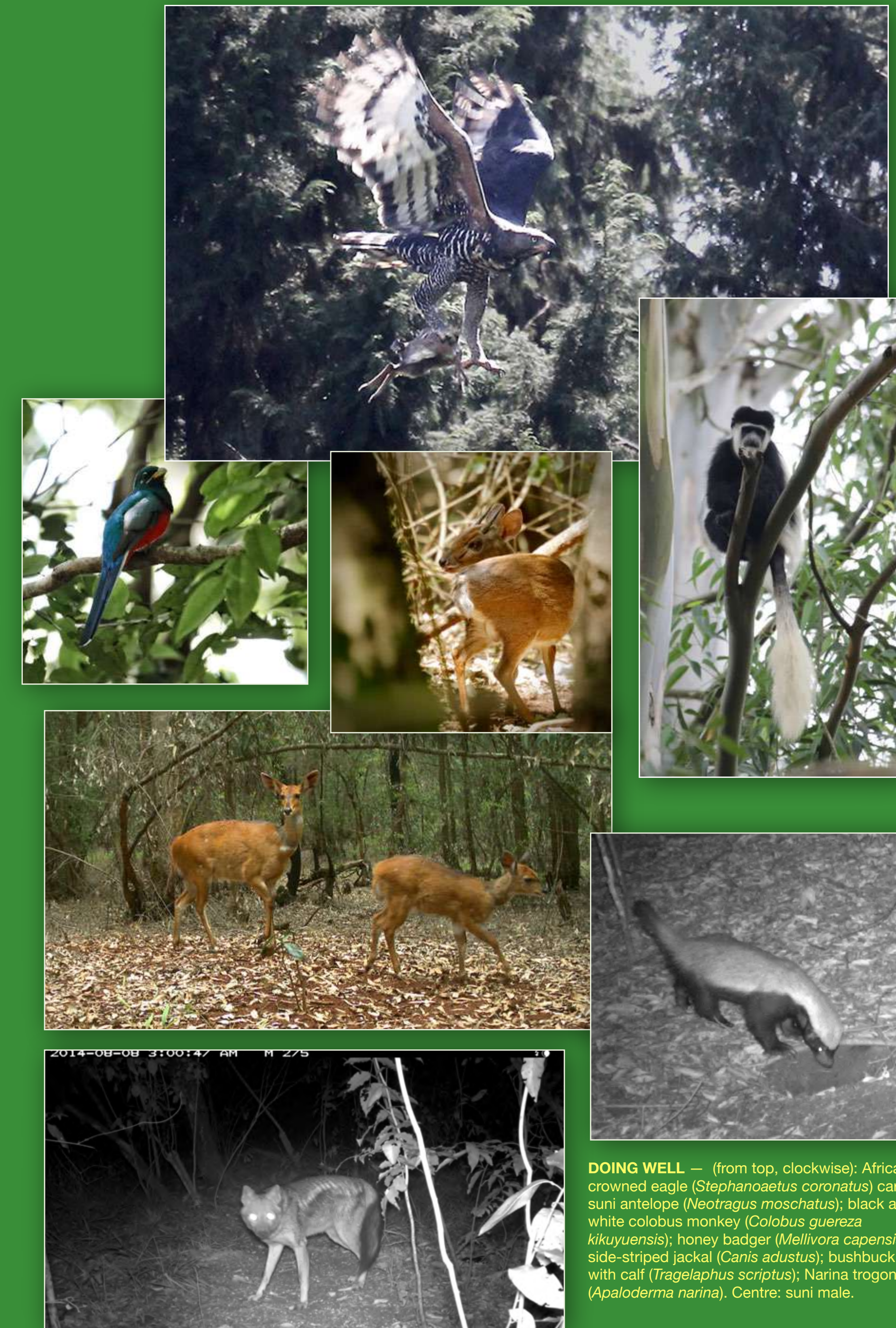
COMBATTING NON-HUMAN THREATS TO FOREST BIODIVERSITY

- 🌿 Invasive Alien Species – *Lantana camara* and Mauritius Thorn (*Caesalpinia decapetala*) – choke forest understory, prevent natural regeneration
- 🌿 Best intervention: manual removal followed by replanting and weeding
- 🌿 Labour-intensive, providing major added benefit of massive job creation for surrounding community

BENEFITS OF ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY IN KARURA

- 🌿 Increased safe habitat for thriving wildlife populations
- 🌿 Reduced monoculture risks from parasites, pathogens, drought
- 🌿 Enhanced ecosystem services for the capital city – carbon sequestration, water table recharge, water course purification, absorption of air pollutants and noise
- 🌿 Eco-tourism attractor for Kenyans and overseas visitors, respite from urban 'heat island', safe and secure place of recreation with nature
- 🌿 Nairobi-based natural 'laboratory' for students to do ecological studies
- 🌿 Healthy, safe forest for school children to learn about importance of forest biodiversity conservation

SIGNS OF FOREST RECOVERY



- 🌿 Return of a top predator – African crowned eagle (left) – recently recorded nesting in Karura after many years of absence. Preys on suni antelope & colobus monkey
- 🌿 Daily sightings of sunis, Harvey's duikers and bushbucks. Numbers up considerably with poaching eliminated. They now accept humans as harmless
- 🌿 Successful 2014 translocation of 132 Colobus (*C. guereza kikuyuensis*) now flourishing in the forest. 33 births recorded.
- 🌿 Previously unrecorded species – African palm civet, side-striped jackal – revealed by camera traps
- 🌿 Clawless otter families captured regularly, suggesting improving stream water quality
- 🌿 After invasive species clearing, pioneer grasses and trees shelter indigenous seedlings and discourage invasive return
- 🌿 Flourishing of small mammal, reptile, amphibian and invertebrate populations – many opportunities for further research

DOING WELL – (from top, clockwise): African crowned eagle (*Stephanoctonus coronatus*) carrying suni antelope (*Neotragus moschatus*); black and white colobus monkey (*Colobus guereza kikuyuensis*); honey badger (*Mellivora capensis*); side-striped jackal (*Canis adustus*); bushbuck doe with calf (*Tragelaphus scriptus*); Narina trogon (*Apaloderma narina*). Centre: suni male.



PARTIAL INVENTORIES REVEAL 558 plant, 202 bird, 22 mammal species

Dominant indigenous tree species in Karura:

- Olea europaea* subsp. *cuspidata*
- Warburgia ugandensis* (Muthiga)
- Machamia lutea*
- Vepris nobilis*
- Newtonia buchananii*
- Ficus thonningii* (Mugumu)
- Dombeya goetzenii*
- Craton megalocarpus*
- Brachylaena huillensis* (Muhugu)
- Uvariadendron anisatum*
- Craebee brownii*
- Salvadora persica* (Mswaki)
- Trichilia emetica*
- Calodendrum capense*

KEYS TO KARURA SUCCESS

- 🌿 Participatory Forest Management through legal partnership between KFS as custodian of forests and FKF as representative of stakeholders
- 🌿 Initial focus: security, infrastructure
- 🌿 Secure boundary with electric fence and controlled points of entry
- 🌿 Financial sustainability through audited management of forest-generated income
- 🌿 'Ownership' of Karura by forest users: 40,000 visits each month
- 🌿 Direct benefits to surrounding community – income, employment, security, education, recreation – ensure commitment, involvement

CURRENT FOCUS – EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Hundreds of Kenya's school children are guided each week on educational walks through Karura Forest by teachers and FKF Guides and Scouts. The future of the earth's biodiversity is in their hands. Are we leaving them the best legacy we can?



Photo: Lucy Nioka, Karura Education Officer

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