earthwatch expeditions
by Nat Hab

Explore with Purpose



Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

Witness the Return of Wildlife in the Maasai Mara as Critical Habitat Recovers

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Trip Details:

Days
9 Days / Jan–Feb, Jul–Nov

Price
From $9976 (+Air)

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

Witness the Return of Wildlife in the Maasai Mara as Critical Habitat Recovers

Kenya's Enarau Conservancy contains a landscape at a tipping point. Spanning more than 3,000 acres on the northern edge of the Greater Maasai Mara ecosystem, this vast wildlife refuge encompasses sweeping grasslands, wetlands and the wildlife that depends on them—elephant, giraffe, zebra, antelope and the predators that follow, including lion and cheetah. But decades of farming and overgrazing have stripped the soil and fragmented habitat, driving animals away. On this native habitat restoration project, you'll help monitor these species' return. Work alongside scientists and Maasai landowners to track wildlife and collect field data, as we test how degraded ecosystems respond. Surveying animal populations, you'll contribute to rebuilding a critical wildlife corridor—a project that will help shape conservation across East Africa.

Expedition Highlights

Experience the Maasai Mara as a Living Laboratory

Stay on the community-owned Enarau Conservancy, where scientists and Maasai landowners are actively restoring the native savanna ecosystem

Observe & Survey Iconic African Wildlife

Help track wildlife movements on the plains, where herds of elephant, giraffe, zebra and antelope are trailed by predators, and action plays out in full view

Support Community-Led Conservation Efforts

Join Maasai landowners and scientific researchers incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to restore land, support wildlife and sustain livelihoods

Research at a Glance



The Research Focus

Restore degraded savanna in the Maasai Mara while tracking how vegetation, soil and wildlife respond, building a clearer understanding of how biodiversity—including wildlife—returns over time.



What You'll Do

Participate in wildlife and bird surveys, monitor animal activity using camera traps, and collect valuable field data on local ecosystems, while contributing to select habitat restoration efforts.



Why It Matters

Decades of land use by humans has degraded Maasai Mara habitat, reducing wildlife and disrupting migrations. This project helps rewild these environs to support species' return across East Africa.

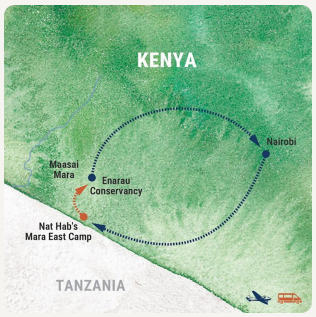


Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya Itinerary

Witness the Return of Wildlife in the Maasai Mara as Critical Habitat Recovers

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	Nairobi
Days 2–3	Private Mara Conservancy
Day 4	Maasai Mara
Days 5–6	Enarau Conservancy
Day 7	Mara Rhino Project / Maasai Community
Day 8	Enarau Conservancy
Day 9	Nairobi



Day 1

Nairobi

Arrive in Nairobi overlooking a wildlife-rich national park

- Settle into a hotel beside Nairobi National Park, where giraffes, zebras, buffalo and other wildlife may be visible
- Join your Field Guide and fellow participants for dinner and an introduction to the Maasai Mara restoration project

Arrive in Kenya's capital of Nairobi, where you are met and transferred to your hotel overlooking the open bush of Nairobi National Park, on the city's edge. A preview of the wildlife to come is on display right outside your door, and animals are frequently in view from the terrace—we may see lions, endangered black rhinos, giraffes, zebras, buffalo, antelope, ostrich and more than 400 other bird species. This evening, gather for a welcome dinner with your Field Guide and fellow participants as you're introduced to the important experience that awaits: Learn what's been lost or damaged in the Maasai Mara landscape, what is being restored, and how your work as part of the team in the field will contribute to crucial conservation efforts.

Days
2–3

Private Mara Conservancy

Watch lions, elephants and great herds cross the Maasai Mara

- Fly by bush plane into the Mara, one of Africa's richest wildlife ecosystems
- Search for lions, elephants, giraffes and hoofed game across the open grasslands
- Stay at Nat Hab's Mara East Camp in a private conservancy

Fly by bush plane to the Maasai Mara, where your first game drive begins soon after landing. Before our field work begins, we enjoy a couple days devoted strictly to the exhilaration of being on safari in this iconic landscape. Animals are immediately in view and abundant—herds moving across the open plains, predators never far behind—offering a clear view of how a fully functioning savanna ecosystem operates. Hoofed game gathers in great herds across the rolling grasslands, elephant and giraffe move between stands of acacia, and lions are frequently spotted, sometimes lazing in the shade of thorn trees, other times racing in pursuit of prey.

Continue to Nat Hab's own Mara East Camp, set within a private conservancy bordering the Maasai Mara National Reserve. With strict limits on vehicles and guests, wildlife viewing in this setting is uncrowded and unhurried. Animals move freely across protected land that serves as a key migration corridor between the Mara and the Loita Plains, and our exclusive camp places you directly within their path. Classic canvas safari tents are spaced for privacy, each with an en suite bathroom and shaded veranda overlooking all the activity on the plains. Enjoy romantic evenings around the campfire, illumined by lantern light, as the night sounds of the Mara carry across the darkness.

Day
4

Maasai Mara

Compare a thriving savanna with land in need of restoration

- Watch wildlife and vegetation diminish as you travel from healthy grasslands into Enarau Conservancy
- Arrive at the research station that serves as your fieldwork base
- Meet the scientists leading the project and learn how the landscape has changed

Depart Nat Hab's Mara East Camp to travel across the Mara to the Enarau Conservancy—an overland transfer that becomes one of the most revealing drives of the trip. What starts as a classic safari—with abundant wildlife traversing the open plains, herds grazing, and predators never far off—gradually changes as we move deeper into the conservancy. Animals become fewer, savanna vegetation becomes more sparse, and the effects of long-term overuse of the land become readily apparent. The contrast unfolds in real time, offering an unusual side-by-side look at how a healthy ecosystem functions and what happens when it begins to break down.

Ultimately, we arrive at the research station inside the conservancy, where our field work takes place Just beyond your door, the surrounding terrain is our project site, with the research team guiding each day's efforts. After settling in, meet the scientists leading the project and begin your orientation. You'll learn how the land has changed over time, what restoration work is being tested, and how your contributions here will help rehabilitate the habitat that supports wildlife movement and return to healthy population numbers.

Days 5–6

Enarau Conservancy

Monitor wildlife and restore habitat across Enarau Conservancy

- Walk or drive transects to record mammals, birds and animal behavior
- Set and check camera traps, then review the wildlife images they capture
- Plant native species, measure vegetation and support nursery operations

Work at Enarau centers on both monitoring and restoring the landscape, with each day offering a different way to understand how this terrain is changing—and how it can be brought back. Alongside our scientist team, you'll move between research sites across the conservancy, contributing to ongoing study efforts. You may walk or drive transects to spot and record mammals and birds, noting group size, behavior and location to further a detailed understanding of how wildlife is using the area. In other locations, you'll measure vegetation and ground cover to track how habitat is recovering. Camera traps extend what we can see in the field, capturing wildlife activity over time, and you'll assist with setting, checking and reviewing images. Restoration work is hands-on, including planting native species and supporting nursery operations.

Throughout, your Lead Scientist and research team guide the work, explaining what you're seeing, how data is collected and how it informs restoration. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), gleaned from the Maasai community, is integrated directly into these methods, influencing how the land is managed and the best strategies for recovery. Your participation forms the third strand of this shared approach to rewilding the land and bringing wildlife back in the process. On some afternoons or evenings, we'll head out by vehicle on a working safari. These drives combine wildlife viewing with data collection, as you record sightings, observe animal behavior and compare how species frequent different parts of the conservancy.

Between fieldwork sessions, take advantage of time to rest and absorb the nuances of your surroundings. Many birds have already returned to the Enarau base camp area, and downtime gives you ample time to observe some of the region's iconic species, often just beyond your cabin. Evenings are unhurried, often spent reviewing images, sharing observations, and hearing from scientists through informal discussions and structured presentations that bring additional depth to the work you're doing. By the end of your time at Enarau, you'll have a clear understanding of how your contributions are furthering this crucial conservation project.

Day 7

Mara Rhino Project / Maasai Community

Link rhino conservation with Maasai land stewardship

- Measure vegetation cover, abundance and productivity across restoration plots
- Visit the Mara Rhino Project and learn about efforts to protect southern white rhinos
- Meet Maasai community members and explore how conservation supports local livelihoods

Begin the day with focused restoration work—one of the most hands-on and rewarding parts of the experience. Working alongside scientists and members of the local community, you'll take part in efforts that directly shape the landscape, from planting native species to supporting nursery operations and maintaining experimental plots. You may also contribute to vegetation surveys, measuring cover, abundance and productivity to understand how different areas are responding. This is where the work becomes tangible. The changes you help put in place remain part of the conservancy, contributing to habitat recovery and the gradual return of wildlife over time.

In the afternoon, visit the Mara Rhino Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring and protecting the ecosystem's endangered southern white rhino population. Here, we gain insight into the urgency of safeguarding these rare and ancient mammals from poaching and habitat loss. Continue to a nearby cultural center, where time spent with Maasai community members offers a deeper understanding of how conservation and livelihoods are closely linked. Local knowledge and traditional land stewardship play a key role in determining how this ecosystem is managed and how restoration efforts continue.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-548-7555

Day 8

Enarau Conservancy

Look for signs of wildlife returning to the restored landscape

- Check camera traps at a final survey site for evidence of wildlife movement and return
- Review your findings with researchers and learn what the data reveals
- Gather for a farewell dinner marking your contribution to the project

On our last day in the field, we visit one more survey area, checking camera traps for wildlife presence and behavior. As patterns start to emerge, revealing animal movement, absence and return, we begin to gain a clearer picture of how this harmed landscape is responding to the rehabilitative work underway. Spend the last few hours alongside researchers reviewing your findings and hearing their interpretation of what the data reveals. It's exciting to see how your fieldwork connects to the broader conservation effort! In the evening, gather for a final dinner as we reflect on our experiences and celebrate our accomplishments, knowing that each individual participant has played a vital role in restoring this ecosystem.

Day 9

Nairobi

Depart Kenya with a firsthand understanding of Mara restoration

- Spend a final morning in Enarau Conservancy
- Fly from the Enarau airstrip to Nairobi for homeward flights

Spend a final morning on the Enarau Conservancy before transferring to the airstrip for your return flight to Nairobi. You'll depart with a clearer understanding of how ecosystems recover—and a direct connection to the science and people working to restore the treasured landscape and wildlife of Kenya's celebrated Maasai Mara.



Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya Accommodations

Witness the Return of Wildlife in the Maasai Mara as Critical Habitat Recovers



Emara Ole Sereni

A contemporary Nairobi hotel overlooking Nairobi National Park, with floor-to-ceiling views, a heated rooftop pool, several dining venues and a full-service spa.



Nat Hab's Mara East Camp—Private Mara Conservancy

Our mobile tented camp on a private conservancy in the Maasai Mara offers the ultimate in proximity to wildlife without the crowds—plus night drives and bush walks not available in the national reserve.



Enarau Research Conservancy

Set within a working wildlife conservancy, this research camp centers on open-air dining featuring traditional Kenyan fare and rooms with shaded verandas overlooking the savanna.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/kenya-maasai-mara-habitat-restoration-trip/accommodations.

Meet the Scientists

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

Lead Scientists



Antonio Uzal, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Conservation Biology, Nottingham Trent University

Wildlife Ecology, Kenya



Andrew Gichira, Ph.D.

Research Manager, Center for Ecosystem Restoration

Restoration Ecology, Kenya



Stewart Thompson, Ph.D.

Emeritus Professor, Oxford Brookes University

Biodiversity Conservation, Kenya

Research & Impact

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

Launched in 2022 at Enarau Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya's Greater Maasai Mara, this project explores how to best rewild degraded savanna. Working alongside scientists and Maasai landowners, participants help test restoration approaches and gather data on how wildlife returns, vegetation regrows and soil begins to rebuild. By combining research with local knowledge, the work is helping identify practical ways to restore habitat, support wildlife and sustain the communities that depend on this landscape.

Research Focus

Across the Greater Maasai Mara, wildlife moves through a patchwork of intact habitat, degraded land and areas beginning to recover. At Enarau Conservancy, former farmland and overgrazed areas create a rare opportunity to study that transition as it unfolds. Here, researchers follow how vegetation returns, how soil conditions change and how wildlife responds. Standardized surveys track biodiversity across the area, while experimental plots test approaches such as reintroducing native plants, removing invasive species and improving soil and water conditions. Conducted in partnership with Maasai landowners, the work combines scientific research with Indigenous and Local Knowledge to understand how best to restore and sustain these ecosystems. Your presence adds a vital third strand to this "braided knowledge system" approach to restoration, with your efforts strengthening the research and accelerating the process of rewilding this native habitat.

Conservation Impact

Early work at Enarau is already producing visible change, while ongoing field data is guiding how degraded land is restored and managed.

- **Native grasses and plants returning** in previously degraded areas
- **Increased wildlife presence** in parts of the conservancy as habitat improves
- **Restoration approaches tested** and refined in the field
- **A growing dataset** tracking changes in vegetation, soil and wildlife
- **Expansion of native seed collection** and nursery networks supporting large-scale restoration
- **A community-led conservancy model** linking habitat recovery with local livelihoods and long-term stewardship
- **Improved ground cover** and reduced erosion in degraded areas
- **Ongoing monitoring** guiding how land is restored, managed and expanded over time

This work is helping define how degraded savanna can recover across the Greater Maasai Mara, with each season adding to a growing record of change.

Your Role in the Research

Each day, you work alongside scientists and field staff, taking part in both monitoring and restoration. You may head out on foot or by vehicle to identify wildlife and observe how animals use different parts of the area. In other locations, you examine plant life and ground conditions, helping reveal how the land is changing. Camera traps are set and checked to capture wildlife activity, and

time is spent reviewing images and recording observations. On your restoration day, shift to planting native species, clearing invasive growth and tending nursery plants. The work changes with the needs of the project, but every task contributes to a clearer understanding of how this ecosystem is recovering—and what it takes to bring it back.

Life in the Field

Mornings often begin with a short drive or walk to survey areas, where you spend hours moving through open terrain, watching for wildlife and noticing subtle changes in the land. Other days unfold closer to camp, working in nursery areas or field plots where the focus turns to planting and care. The pace shifts between active time in the field and quieter moments reviewing what you've seen. Wildlife is part of the backdrop—giraffes on the horizon, zebras grazing nearby, antelopes moving through the grass. Evenings are relaxed, with time to share observations, record notes and prepare for the next day. Over time, patterns begin to stand out—where wildlife gathers, how the land is changing and how each day's work fits into a larger effort to bring it back.

Field Conditions

Work takes place outdoors across open savanna and restoration areas, both on foot and by vehicle. Expect warm temperatures, strong sun and wide, exposed terrain with uneven ground underfoot. Some days involve walking several miles and standing for long stretches, while others focus on more stationary tasks like planting or tending seedlings. The work can be physical at times—bending, lifting and repeating simple movements—but it is steady rather than intense. Weather can shift, and plans adjust with it. Some days are full and active, others slower and more focused. A reasonable level of fitness and comfort spending time outside will help you stay engaged throughout.

Discovery in the Field

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

1. **Live on a Landscape in Recovery**
   Stay on the community-owned and managed Enarau Conservancy, established in 2022, where inspiring renewal efforts are visible and daily fieldwork takes places just outside your door.

2. **Experience the Maasai Mara Beyond a Traditional Safari**
   Enjoy the thrill of observing the Maasai Mara's abundant wildlife with added ecological insight that comes from this land restoration project integral to the well-being of animals and people alike.

3. **Understand What's Driving Ecological Change in the Mara**
   Learn how grazing, climate change and human land-use pressures are shaping the Maasai Mara, and why restoring balance across this ecosystem is a complex and urgent task.

4. **Visit a Native Seed Nursery**
   Discover how native plants are grown using Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to guide restoration and support long-term ecosystem recovery.

5. **Understand the People and Ideas Behind the Work**
   Spend time with Maasai community members to see how land use, culture and conservation intersect, discovering how ecological recovery and human well-being are closely linked.

6. **Learn From an Expert Naturalist Field Guide**
   In addition to your science team, your Field Guide is with you throughout the entire trip to ensure that each day runs smoothly, coordinating logistics and providing personalized support throughout.

7. **Travel With an Intentionally Small Group**
   A limited group size ensures meaningful time in the field, direct access to scientists and an active role in daily conservation work.

8. **Explore with Purpose**
   Take part in fieldwork that supports ongoing conservation, contributing to the recovery of wildlife and habitat across one of Africa's most important ecosystems.



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $9976 (+Air)

Group Size
Limited to 12 Travelers

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya Dates, Pricing & Info

Witness the Return of Wildlife in the Maasai Mara as Critical Habitat Recovers

2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Feb 10 - Feb 18, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	
Jul 1 - Jul 9, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Jul 9 - Jul 17, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	
Aug 11 - Aug 19, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	
Sep 7 - Sep 15, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	
Sep 29 - Oct 7, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	
Oct 7 - Oct 15, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Nov 11 - Nov 19, 2027	**$9976** +internal air	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Jan 7 - Jan 15, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Feb 18 - Feb 26, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Jul 3 - Jul 11, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Jul 14 - Jul 22, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Aug 22 - Aug 30, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Sep 5 - Sep 13, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Sep 13 - Sep 21, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Oct 13 - Oct 21, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	
Oct 24 - Nov 1, 2028	**From $9976** +internal air	

See https://www.nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/kenya-maasai-mara-habitat-restoration-trip/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

All accommodations, domestic flights within Kenya, services of our professional Expedition Leaders, local guides and lodge staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through lunch on final day, some alcoholic beverages, laundry at some locations, private transfers throughout the itinerary, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages at some locations, some gratuities, laundry at some locations, souvenir purchases, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Internal air: All flights within the itinerary (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

Important Information About This Trip

Conditions & Environment

- Be comfortable outdoors for extended periods in heat, sun, or rain

- You will be accompanied by an armed ranger on each research day for wildlife safety
- Expect insects, including mosquitoes, and the potential presence of wildlife such as elephants or predators
- Follow guidance from trained staff and rangers at all times, including in wildlife situations
- Be prepared for limited access to restrooms while in the field (up to several hours)

Additional Considerations

- Basic comfort with remote travel conditions and a flexible mindset are important
- Ability to follow safety instructions and communicate clearly with staff is essential
- Guests should be comfortable engaging with different cultures and working closely in a small group setting

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least $250,000 in medical evacuation coverage. To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-548-7555.

Getting There & Getting Home

Because weather delays are possible, **we recommend that you arrive at least one night prior to Day 1** to rest from your travels and begin the trip refreshed. For guests who come in early, our recommended hotel will be included in your pre-departure materials.

This trip begins and ends in Nairobi, Kenya. **You must arrive at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport by 5 pm on Day 1** in order to make it to the hotel in time for a 7 pm welcome dinner. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

You may depart Nairobi any time after 8:30 pm on the final day as you will arrive at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport around 5:30pm.

Our Earthwatch Expeditions Nat Hab Air Team can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-548-7555. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.

Know Before You Go

Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

The Greater Maasai Mara is one of East Africa's most important wildlife ecosystems, where herds of grazers move across open savanna and predators follow seasonal patterns tied to water and grass. These movements depend on connected habitats—but in recent decades, land use change, overgrazing and invasive species have degraded parts of the landscape, disrupting wildlife movement and reducing biodiversity.

Why Is the Greater Maasai Mara a Critical Landscape for Monitoring Wildlife Recovery and Habitat Restoration?

Restoration efforts in areas like Enarau Conservancy aim to rebuild these habitats and reconnect key wildlife corridors across the Mara region. By working in a landscape that borders one of Africa's most wildlife-rich ecosystems, participants contribute to research that supports habitat recovery and helps sustain wildlife movement across the broader savanna.

Quick Facts: Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya

- **Location:** Enarau Conservancy, Greater Maasai Mara, Kenya
- **Research partners:** Center for Ecosystem Restoration Kenya (CERK) and Nottingham Trent University (NTU)
- **Primary focus:** Savanna ecosystem restoration and biodiversity recovery
- **Key activity:** Wildlife surveys, vegetation monitoring and habitat restoration
- **Conservation focus:** Habitat recovery, wildlife return and ecological connectivity

What Wildlife Will I See on a Kenya Expedition?

The Maasai Mara ecosystem supports a wide range of savanna wildlife, and participants experience both high-density wildlife areas and landscapes undergoing restoration. Wildlife may also be recorded through camera traps, offering insight into species that move through restoration areas, including those less frequently seen during fieldwork. These open savanna ecosystems support complex predator-prey dynamics and seasonal wildlife movement, making them a critical focus for restoration and conservation.

Participants may encounter:

- **Plains zebras** grazing across open grasslands
- **Giraffes** browsing on acacia trees
- **Antelopes** such as impala, Thomson's gazelle, Grant's gazelle and topi
- **Wildebeest** moving through the ecosystem, especially during migration periods
- **African elephants** traveling between savanna and woodland habitats
- **African buffalo** grazing in herds across open plains
- **Lions** resting or hunting across open plains
- **Spotted hyenas and black-backed jackals** moving at dawn and dusk
- **Cheetahs** scanning for prey in open grassland areas

- **Leopards** in woodland or riverine habitats (less frequently seen)
- **Warthogs** and other grazing mammals feeding in short grass
- **Hippos** in river systems and water sources

Birdlife is abundant and varied, including:

- **Lilac-breasted rollers, hornbills, starlings and weaver birds**
- **Raptors** such as bateleurs, fish eagles and vultures
- **Ground birds** such as secretary birds and kori bustards

What Is the Climate Like in the Maasai Mara?

The Maasai Mara has a warm, semi-arid savanna climate with strong sun exposure, cooler mornings and evenings, and seasonal rainfall that influences vegetation and field conditions.

Conditions vary throughout the year, with dry periods offering clear skies and strong sun, while rainy seasons bring greener landscapes, muddy terrain and more variable field conditions.

Season	What to Expect
Dry Season (June–October)	75–85°F during the day, cooler mornings and evenings, dry conditions and strong sun exposure
Short Rains (November–December)	75–85°F with intermittent rain showers and increasing humidity
Hot Dry Period (January–February)	85–90°F with hotter daytime conditions and little rainfall
Long Rains (March–May)	70–80°F with more frequent rain, muddy terrain and increased vegetation growth

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need research experience?

No prior research experience is required. Scientists and field staff provide training and guidance in field observation techniques and ecological data collection.

What type of research will I assist with?

Participants assist with ecosystem restoration and wildlife habitat monitoring. Activities may include vegetation surveys, recording wildlife signs, monitoring restoration sites, removing invasive plant species and collecting environmental data.

What is the conservation impact of this research?

This expedition supports habitat restoration and conservation in the Maasai Mara. Data collected in the field helps scientists evaluate ecosystem recovery and guide restoration efforts that support wildlife populations and ecological connectivity.

How physically demanding is the expedition?

Participants should be comfortable walking up to 3–4 miles per day at a pace of about one mile per hour across uneven terrain and working outdoors in warm conditions. Participants should also be comfortable bending down, squatting and getting back up. Fieldwork may include removing invasive plants, measuring vegetation and collecting ecological data.

Can weather affect research activities?

Yes. Weather conditions such as heavy rain or extreme heat may affect fieldwork and daily schedules. Researchers adjust plans as needed to maintain safety and continue restoration and monitoring activities.

What happens in case of an emergency?

Participant safety is a priority on all expeditions. Field staff follow established safety procedures and maintain communication during field activities, and trained rangers accompany teams in wildlife areas.

If medical care is required, staff coordinate transportation to the nearest medical facility, typically reachable within 25 minutes, with a hospital approximately one hour away.

Do I need travel insurance?

Travel insurance is strongly recommended and should include coverage for trip cancellation, interruption, medical expenses and emergency evacuation.

Earthwatch Expeditions provides travel medical insurance for participants.

What immunizations & travel vaccinations do I need?

Participants should consult a healthcare provider before travel, as routine vaccinations and malaria prevention measures may be recommended for Kenya. Participants should also take precautions against insect bites while working outdoors.

What should I bring?

Participants receive a detailed packing list before departure outlining recommended clothing, field gear and personal supplies. Essential items include lightweight clothing, durable footwear, sun protection and gear suitable for outdoor fieldwork in savanna conditions.

What Should I Pack for a Kenya Expedition?

Participants should pack for warm, sunny conditions with occasional rain and active outdoor fieldwork in savanna environments. Layered clothing and sun protection are important year-round due to strong sun exposure and changing conditions. Recommended items include:

- Lightweight long-sleeved shirts for sun protection
- Durable trousers suitable for walking through vegetation
- Lightweight layers for cooler mornings and evenings
- Well-worn hiking boots with ankle support
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Insect repellent
- Two one-liter refillable water bottles or a hydration bladder
- Small daypack
- Binoculars (required for wildlife observation tasks)

For rainy periods (March–May and November–December), also bring:

- Lightweight rain jacket or poncho
- Waterproof or water-resistant footwear
- Extra socks

What Will I Experience While Study Big Game on Safari in Kenya?

Participants move between wildlife-rich conservancies and restoration areas, gaining a clear understanding of how healthy ecosystems function and what happens when landscapes are degraded. Time in the field combines wildlife observation with hands-on conservation work, offering direct insight into how restoration supports biodiversity.

What Does Daily Fieldwork Look Like?

Fieldwork includes a mix of walking and vehicle-based activities, with participants assisting scientists in wildlife surveys, vegetation monitoring and habitat restoration. Tasks may include recording mammals and birds along transects, measuring vegetation and ground cover, working with camera traps and supporting restoration efforts such as planting native species or managing nursery sites.

Activities vary based on weather, research priorities and seasonal conditions, with guidance provided throughout by scientists and field staff.



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