

Elephants know no borders and often roam widely in search of food and water. A reduction in rainfall due to climate change may force them to wander even further

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# Hello!

## Welcome to your latest elephant update



**Joel Muinde,**  
**communication**  
**coordinator, WWF-Kenya**

Kenya's Maasai Mara – home to your adopted elephants – hosts the world's largest mammal migration. Wildebeest and zebras famously journey between the Mara and the Serengeti in Tanzania. Elephants cover similarly vast

distances on their seasonal wanderings, sometimes crossing national boundaries as they look for food and water. For wildlife, there are no borders – that's why we take a similar approach to conservation. Your support enables us to work across the entire Mara-Serengeti ecosystem and beyond. Turn over to find out how your elephants are tracked, wherever they may go...

*Thank you*

### MEET THE ADOPTION TEAM

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## FIELD NOTES

David can easily cover six kilometres in the three hours between 'pings' from his collar

# WITHOUT BORDERS

Thanks to your support, we can monitor elephants across international borders – and one particular elephant is a regular traveller

In Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve, a 4x4 roars over the bumpy ground, jostling the team of researchers inside. Unperturbed, they peer through binoculars and shout out directions to the driver. "There he is!" shouts Evans Murithi. "It's David!"

The researchers are part of a team at Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) who monitor your adopted elephants as they move across the Mara. The elephants wear collars with multi-purpose GPS trackers. They help us learn more about the elephants' behaviour and preferred routes; give communities an early warning if a herd is getting too close; and enable the team to regularly find the elephants to check their health and ensure their collars are working.

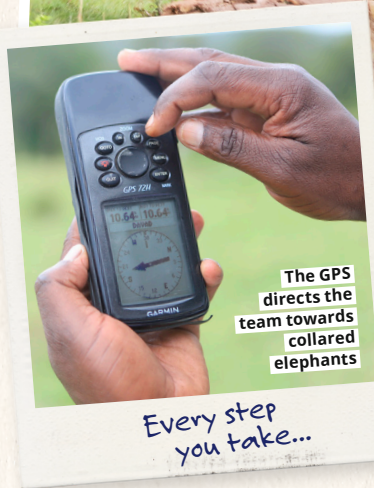
To save precious battery life, each collar transmits a signal only once every three hours, so the team must move quickly if they're to find the elephants. "They're scattered all over the landscape," explains Evans. "The moment our tracking app updates, we race to the spot where they were last recorded – and that may be many kilometres from their previous location."

The team must be particularly quick if they want to find the elephant known as David, as he's famous for covering large distances in a short space of time. It's even possible he might have left the country by the time the team arrive. Once they get there, the researchers' trials aren't over. "Often you know the collar is there, but you

The herd may be out in the open now, but it's amazing how swiftly they melt away into the bushes



David's size can be appreciated when seen alongside this younger, smaller bull from his family group



The GPS directs the team towards collared elephants

Every step you take...

still can't see the elephant wearing it," explains Evans. "If they're in bushes, or a valley, or the forest, it's amazing how these huge animals can hide."

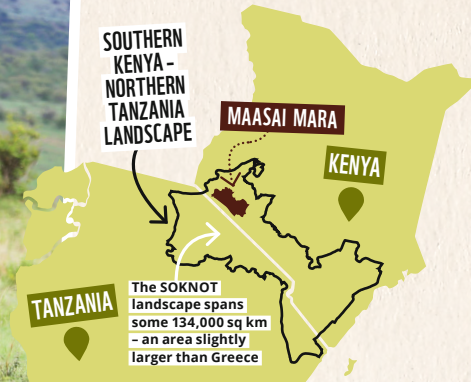
African elephants' diets shift seasonally. In the wet season they favour nutritious grass, then in the dry season they switch to woody plants. Over the year, they range widely looking for food and water – and sometimes this requires international

travel. For the past six months, David has been across the border in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park. But recently he's made his way back up north, into the Maasai Mara. It's always great to welcome David back.

Among your adopted elephants, David is the expert at navigating the Kenya-Tanzania border. "He knows his ecosystem and uses it well," says Evans. "With the start of the rains, he's probably back in Kenya to feast on the fresh green vegetation." The question is, if David were a human, would he be a Kenyan or Tanzanian citizen? "I'd say he's a dual citizen – that's why we have to take a borderless approach to conservation," says Evans.

David embodies the importance of cross-border conservation partnerships. We're working with KWS to track elephants like him across a huge transboundary landscape in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, known as SOKNOT for short. This gives us vital insights into the health of the elephants and the entire ecosystem.

Joel



SOUTHERN KENYA - NORTHERN TANZANIA LANDSCAPE

MAASAI MARA

KENYA

TANZANIA

The SOKNOT landscape spans some 134,000 sq km - an area slightly larger than Greece

## OUT AND ABOUT

We've caught up with some familiar faces while we've been on patrol in the Mara.



Chelsea

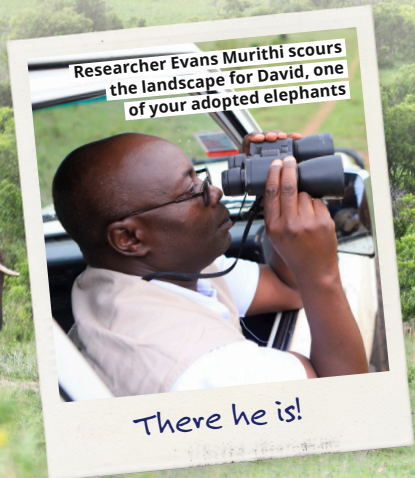


Fred



Lempiris

Watch our short film showing Evans and his colleagues as they track David across his huge home range.



Researcher Evans Murithi scours the landscape for David, one of your adopted elephants

There he is!