

Suggested Reading List for East Africa

Guides

Bradt Safari Guides – Kenya, Uganda & Northern Tanzania (*Philip Briggs*)

A compact, practical overview of the history, wildlife and attractions of Kenya, Uganda and northern Tanzania.

Wildlife of East Africa (*Martin B. Withers & David Hosking*)

This take-along guide to 475 common species of birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, trees and flowers of East Africa features full-colour photographs with detailed descriptions on facing pages.

Title (*Author*)

The Safari Companion (*Richard Estes*)

An invaluable encyclopaedic guide to Africa's mammals by a noted scientist. Written with the typical safari-goer in mind, this perennial bestseller includes black-and-white drawings, an overview of each group and in-depth information.

Eyewitness Guide Kenya (*Philip Briggs*)

Another gem in the Eyewitness series, this superb guide is handsome, convenient and up-to-date; it's the guide to carry. Featuring colour photography, dozens of excellent local maps and a region-by-region synopsis of the country's attractions, it also has an overview of parks and habitats, and a 50-page field guide.

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Field Guide to common Trees and Shrubs of East Africa (*Najma Dharani*)

This book is a selective field guide to the more common trees and shrubs, indigenous, naturalized and exotic that are found in the East African region. The text highlights the importance of trees in the social, economic and religious lives of the people of East Africa, and also provides accounts of their use in traditional medicine.

Birds of Kenya and Northern Tanzania (*Dale A. Zimmerman, Donald A. Turner, David J. Pearson, and Ian Willis* (*Illustrator*))

Kenya alone boasts more than 1100 species of bird. This book is considered the definitive guide and includes information on appearance, plumage, vocalization, habits, status, and distribution.

Non-fiction Reading

Safari (*Geoffrey Kent*)

In this breath-taking travel memoir and adventure guide, Geoffrey Kent, the founder of Abercrombie & Kent, takes readers on a whirlwind tour around the globe, sharing his best-kept secrets and the stories that inspired his success. His life reads like a work of fiction, growing up barefoot in the African bush, riding his motorcycle across the continent, and ultimately becoming the most sought-after travel professional in the world.

Ivory, Apes & Peacocks (*Alan Root*)

Alan Root is one of the great wildlife pioneers. Ivory, Apes & Peacocks tells the story of his life's work, from his arrival in Kenya as a young boy to the making of his game-changing films. From a hot-air balloon Alan was the first to track the wildebeest migration; then he flew it over Kilimanjaro. He filmed inside a termite mound and dived with hippos and crocodiles. In this extraordinary memoir we look at Africa's wonders through the eyes of a visionary, live through hair-raising

adventure and personal sorrow, and also bear witness to a natural world now largely lost from view.

My Life with the Chimpanzees (*Jane Goodall*)

From the time she was a girl, Jane Goodall dreamed of a life spent working with animals. Finally, she had her wish. When she was twenty-six years old, she ventured into the forests of Africa to observe chimpanzees in the wild. On her expeditions she braved the dangers with leopards and lions in the African bush.

I Dreamed of Africa (*Kuki Gallmann*)

A memoir by Italian writer Kuki Gallmann. The book focuses on Gallmann's lifelong interest in Africa. The memoir ranges from her childhood's fascination with the continent to her 1972 decision to relocate to Kenya to run a farm in the Laikipia plain with her husband and son.

West with the Night (*Beryl Markham*)

West with the Night is a 1942 memoir by Beryl Markham, chronicling her experiences growing up in Kenya in the early 1900s, leading to celebrated careers as a racehorse trainer and bush pilot there.

Green Hills of Africa (*Ernest Hemingway*)

Green Hills of Africa is an account of a month on safari Hemmingway and his wife, Pauline Marie Pfeiffer, took in East Africa during December 1933. Hemingway paints the true story of his ramblings on safari in this classic, exquisitely written tale of hunting around Lake Manyara, which includes some of the best writing on the land itself and original pencil drawings.

Maasai (*Tepilit Ole Saitoti & Carol Beckwith*)

The author recounts ancient Maasai legends and songs, and powerfully describes the vivid ceremonies that mark the passages in Maasai life. Everyday tribal life and the ceremonial high points are photographed with a clarity and eye for drama that make Maasai a breath-taking experience.

The Shadow of Kilimanjaro: On Foot Across East Africa (*Rick Ridgeway*)

This is the story of the author's journey from Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania through Kenya to the Indian Ocean. Accompanied by park officers, he treks among lion, elephants, rhino, and ungulates -- and ponders the important issues that must be resolved to strike a sustainable balance between the needs of wildlife and the needs of local people.

Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa (*Jeanette Winter*)

This true story of Wangari Maathai, environmentalist and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, is a shining example of how one woman's passion, vision, and determination inspired great change.

Too Close To the Sun: The Life and Times of Denys Finch Hatton (*Sara Wheeler*)

Denys Finch Hatton was adored by women and idolized by men. A champion of Africa, legendary for his good looks, his charm, and his prowess as a soldier, lover, and hunter, Finch Hatton inspired Karen Blixen to write the unforgettable stories in Out of Africa. Now esteemed British biographer Sara Wheeler tells the truth about this extraordinarily charismatic adventurer.

A Thousand Hills: Rwanda's Rebirth and the Man Who Dreamed It (*Stephen Kinzer*)

This is the story of Paul Kagame, a refugee who, after a generation of exile, found his way home. Learn about President Kagame, who strives to make Rwanda the first middle-income country in Africa, in a single generation. In this adventurous tale, learn about Kagame's early fascination with Che Guevara and James Bond, his years as an intelligence agent, his training in Cuba and the United States, the way he built his secret rebel army, his bloody rebellion, and his outsized ambitions for Rwanda.

Born Free: The Full Story (*Joy Adamson*)

Friederike Victoria "Joy" Adamson was a naturalist, artist and author. Her book, *Born Free*, describes her experiences raising a lion cub named Elsa.

An African Love Story: Love, Life and Elephants (*Dame Daphne Sheldrick*)

An African Love Story is the incredible memoir of her life. It tells two stories - one is the extraordinary love story which blossomed when Daphne fell head over heels with Tsavo Game Park and its famous warden, David Sheldrick. The second is the love story of how Daphne and David, who devoted their lives to saving elephant orphans, at first losing every infant under the age of two until Daphne at last managed to devise the first-ever milk formula which would keep them alive.

The Marsh Lions: The Story of an African Pride (*Brian Jackman, Jonathan Scott & Angela Scott*)

The Marsh Lions tells the story of a pride of lions in Kenya's world-famous Masai Mara game reserve. For five years, Brian Jackman and Jonathan Scott followed the Marsh pride and their progeny, recording the daily drama of life and death on the African plains. In time they came to regard them as old and familiar friends and real individuals.

Out of Africa (*Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen)*)

"I had a farm in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong Hills." The story recounts the events of Blixen's life on a coffee plantation in Kenya, then British East Africa. It's a tale of African colonial life and the people who touched her life while there.

Gorillas in the Mist (*Dian Fossey*)

This significant novel tells of American zoologist Dian Fossey's thirteen incredible and admirable years spent working with the endangered mountain gorillas in the remote forests of Rwanda.

DON'T RUN, Whatever You Do: My Adventures as a Safari Guide (*Peter Allison*)

A charming, off-the-wall and thoroughly entertaining travel book recounting the true-life adventures of a young safari guide living in the Botswana bush, confronting the world's fiercest terrain and wildest animals and, most challenging of all, herds of gaping tourists.

Bones of Contention (*Roger Lewin*)

This is a behind-the-scenes look at the search for human origins. Analysing how the biases and preconceptions of paleoanthropologists shaped their work, Roger Lewin's detective stories about the discovery of Neanderthal Man, the Taung Child, Lucy, and other major fossils provide insight into this most subjective of scientific endeavours.

Fiction Reading**White Mischief** (*James Fox*)

White Mischief is a novel by British journalist James Fox. It is the fictionalized account of the unsolved murder in 1941 of Josslyn Hay, the Earl of Erroll, a British expatriate in Kenya. The title is a pun on the 1932 Evelyn Waugh novel *Black Mischief*. The book was adapted for film in 1987.

A Bend in the River (*V.S Naipaul*)

Written by Nobel Prize winner V.S. Naipaul, *A Bend in the River* is set in Idi Amin's Uganda, and follows the story of an Indian merchant trying to survive the political and economic turbulence of a newly independent East African country.

The Constant Gardener (*John le Carré*)

The novel opens in northern Kenya with the gruesome murder of Tessa Quayle--young, beautiful, and dearly beloved to husband Justin. When Justin sets out on a personal odyssey to uncover the mystery of her death, what he finds could make him not only a suspect among his own colleagues, but a target for Tessa's killers as well.

Baking Cakes in Kigali (*Gaile Parkin*)

This gloriously written tale, set in modern-day Rwanda, introduces one of the most singular and engaging characters in recent fiction: Angel Tungaraza—mother, cake baker, keeper of secrets, a woman living on the edge of chaos, finding ways to transform lives, weave magic, and create hope amid the madness swirling all around her.

A Guide to the Birds of East Africa (*Nicholas Drayson*)

For the past three years, Mr. Malik has been secretly in love with Rose Mbikwa, a woman who leads the weekly bird walks sponsored by the East African Ornithological Society. Just as Malik is getting up the nerve to invite Rose to the Nairobi Hunt Club Ball (the premier social occasion of the Kenyan calendar), Harry Khan, a nemesis from his school days, arrives in town. Khan has also become enraptured with Rose and announces his intent to invite her to the Ball. Rather than force Rose to choose between the two men, a clever solution is proposed. Whoever can identify the most species of birds in one week's time gets the privilege of asking Ms. Mbikwa to the ball.

The Zanzibar Chest (*Aidan Hartley*)

Hartley, an acclaimed frontline reporter who covered the atrocities of 1990s Africa, embarks on a journey to unlock the mysteries and secrets of his own family's 150-year-colonial legacy in Africa. A beautiful, sometimes harrowing memoir of intrepid young men cut down in their prime, of forbidden love and its fatal consequences, and of family and history. and the collision of cultures over the enduring course of British colonialism in Africa that defined them both.

The Book of Secrets (*M.G. Vassanji*)

In 1988, a retired schoolteacher named Pius Fernandes receives an old diary found in the back room of an East African shop. Written in 1913 by a British colonial administrator, the diary captivates Fernandes, who begins to research the coded history he encounters in its terse, laconic entries. What he uncovers is a story of forbidden liaisons and simmering vengeance, family secrets and cultural exiles--a story that leads him on an investigative journey through his own past and Africa's.

The African Queen (*C.S. Forester*)

The story opens in August/September 1914. Rose Sayer, a 33-year-old Englishwoman, is the companion and housekeeper of her brother Samuel, an Anglican missionary in German-colonized Tanganyika. World War I has recently begun, and the German military commander of the area has conscripted all the natives; the village is deserted, and only Rose and her dying brother remain. Samuel dies during the night and Rose is alone.

The Last King of Scotland (*Giles Foden*)

Focusing on the rise of Ugandan President Idi Amin and his reign as dictator from 1971 to 1979, the novel is written as the memoir of a fictional Scottish doctor in Amin's employ.

Circling the Sun (*Paula McLain*)

Brought to Kenya from England as a child and then abandoned by her mother, Beryl Markham is raised by both her father and the native Kipsigis tribe who share his estate. Her unconventional upbringing transforms Beryl into a bold young woman with a fierce love of all things wild and an inherent understanding of nature's delicate balance. But even the wild child must grow up, and when everything Beryl knows and trusts dissolves, she is catapulted into a string of disastrous relationships. Beryl forges her own path as a horse trainer, and her uncommon style attracts the eye of the Happy Valley set, a decadent, bohemian community of European expats who also live and love by their own set of rules. But it's the ruggedly charismatic Denys Finch Hatton who ultimately helps Beryl navigate the uncharted territory of her own heart. The intensity of their love reveals Beryl's truest self and her fate: to fly.

Films

Africa, The Serengeti (1994)

James Earl Jones narrates this dazzling 40-minute IMAX documentary of the migration of wildebeest in the Serengeti and Maasai Mara.

Big Cat Diary Series (1996)

A long-running nature documentary produced by the BBC, the Big Cat Diary is a series that follows the lives of big African cats in Kenya's Maasai Mara Reserve. Each series was about the day-to-day lives of a lion pride, a cheetah family and a leopard family as they make kills, raise their cubs and fight off rivals. The series is called the original wildlife soap opera for its new kind of wildly popular wildlife documentary format.

Africa (2013)

Africa, the world's wildest continent. David Attenborough takes us on an awe-inspiring journey through one of the most diverse places in the world. Visiting deserts, savannas, and jungles and meeting up with some of Africa's amazing wildlife.

Two in the bush (1978)

A behind-the-scenes view of an adventurous pair of wildlife filmmakers, Two in the Bush is a compilation film telling the story of award-winning cinematographers Alan and Joan Root. Detailing how they achieved some of their most remarkable and dangerous footage the documentary brings to light their skill, patience and overall passion for the natural world.

The Queen of Katwe: A Story of Life, Chess, and One Extraordinary Girl's Dream of Becoming a Grandmaster (2016)

The Queen of Katwe is an inspirational real-life story about one young girl defying all odds. Phiona Mutesi is growing up in the slums of Uganda's capital when she is introduced to the game of chess. With the help of her teachers and family, she goes on to be one of Uganda's best female chess champions. The poverty her family endures and the constant struggles that so many face in Africa make this film a hard one to watch, especially after seeing it in real life.

The First Grader (2010)

This biographical drama film is based on the true story of Kimani Maruge, a Kenyan farmer who enrolled in elementary school at the age of 84 following the Kenyan government's announcement of free universal primary education in 2003.

Virunga (2014)

Set in the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Virunga follows the story of four rangers fighting to protect the home of the world last mountain gorillas. The rangers have to battle against the violent M23 Rebellion, poachers and the threat of oil exploration.