

# CROWS NO MORE! PROJECT

Activity Report – June 2024, Eric Kinoti, Colin Jackson

## Summary of Activities in June

The stakeholders meeting led by KWS finally happened in Mombasa in early June. We have visited KAA (Kenya Airports Authority) at the Malindi airport and several hotels to rally support from them as they are heavily affected by the crows. A roost count was carried out in both Kilifi (19,485 crows counted) and Vipingo (2,980 crows).

The awareness campaign for *Crows No More!* has started in earnest through blogs and an interview on a local radio so as to raise awareness among the public about the menace of the crows and the plan to control them.

## Stakeholders Meeting

The stakeholders met in Mombasa at the KWS offices on 7 June chaired by Prof Charles Musyoki. Among the attendees were KWS and WRTI (Wildlife Research and Training Institute) who represented the government, A Rocha Kenya and Little Kenya Gardens Ltd, as well as hotel representatives and individual groups from both North and South Coast.

The participants summarized previous efforts to eliminate the House Crows and their impacts. Cecilia Ruto (Little Kenya Gardens) gave a brief summary of the efficacy test she conducted in 2020 on south coast. She said that 3,000 House Crows were poisoned and killed during this exercise.

The stakeholders later concluded that a target be set of eliminating a million House Crows by December 2024. A subcommittee was formed to draw up a proposal and



*Prof. Charles Musyoki, the Director of Wildlife and Community Service at KWS chairing the stakeholder meeting in Mombasa.*

budget for the entire coast to be presented back to KWS.

A Rocha Kenya was given the go-ahead to purchase and use the available Starlicide poison that remained from the efficacy testing and use it through the *Crows No More!* project in Malindi, Vipingo, Kilifi and Watamu. What remained was to finalise proposal with KWS and raise the funds.

## Fundraising

In an effort to marshal more funding and to gain a better understanding of the wider scope of the crow problem, Eric visited KAA at the Malindi airport through Patrick Gor, the Secretary of the Wildlife and Bird Strike Committee. He said that House Crows are a major problem to planes and sometimes cause flight delays or delay landing as pilots have to wait in the air while runways are cleared. KAA have expressed an interest to support the work which we will follow up on and we plan to visit airlines like Safarilink in a bid to rally more support. Other hotels and businesses have also expressed an interest in the project and we shall be visiting them and discussing what this could look like. The donations via Mchanga as of 01/07/2023 were at Ksh 1,141,990. We would like to appreciate all those who have sent funds and continued to rally more support. A fundraising poster was produced with details of how to donate.



## Kilifi and Vipingo Roost Count

We conducted a roost count in both Kilifi and Vipingo to estimate the number of House Crows in these areas. We counted 19,485 House Crows in Kilifi and 2,980 in Vipingo. There was a challenge in Vipingo in that it was difficult to count many of the crows flying below the level of the trees from the slaughterhouse side to the main roost site in trees at the Vipingo cemetery. From the actual roost site we estimated that there were probably c.5,000 House Crows on site. It was also observed that most of the House Crows were coming from the Vipingo ridge side to the south of Vipingo town at sunset.



*Patrick (left) watches over Vipingo as he counts crows. Anderson (right) and two other volunteers watch over the Vipingo ridge side as they count the House Crows coming to roost.*

## Awareness Raising

In order to spread information on Crow Control, we explored the option of mass media. We visited Lulu Fm, a radio station in Malindi that broadcasts throughout the entire coast in Swahili. We also visited Vito Africa, a youth YouTube vlogging site that discusses environmental matters. The message we delivered outlined why we are eliminating House Crows, the method we are using and the outcomes we are expecting. Awareness creation is crucial as it keeps the public up to date and minimizes conflicts which could result from lack of knowledge. We will continue to create awareness as we progress with the project as it is a great way to gather support from the public. The [recording to the Vito Africa](#) interview on YouTube can be found at this link.



*Eric being interviewed at Vito Africa (left) and at Lulu FM studios (right).*

## Wild Bird Rehabilitation

This month we did not receive any new birds at the Watamu rehab centre. Currently we have an African Goshawk and three young White-faced Scops Owls which will hopefully be released when they mature.

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