



KENYA

Piper Mackay Photography

A visual journey through an exotic land



KENYA

An icon of Africa, Kenya is a fascinating country filled with exotic wildlife, ancient cultures and dramatic eco systems. This intriguing world offers unparalleled diversity contained in a relatively small corner of the African continent. From the thundering of the herds storming across the Great Plains, to the exotic tribes and camels in Northern Kenya, or the dhowes sailing the Indian Ocean on the coast, Kenya is a wild freedom full of power

and beauty. The sights, sounds, and smells are intoxicating and captivating to the soul. One only has to see the lone acacia silhouetted against a horizon stretching into eternity to be drawn in by its mystery. From all of the romance of the Karen Blixen days, to the vision of a Land Rover heading through the bush, Kenya is the very essence of Africa; one that stirs a deep longing to safari through its magical lands.

“You know you are truly alive when you’re living among lions.”

— Karen Blixen, Out of Africa

PIPER MACKAY



Piper Mackay's journey as an African wildlife and cultural photographer has taken her on adventures across the African continent. Driven to create compelling image-

ry and stories that make a difference, her work takes her far off the beaten path, immersed into the cultures and wild environments she is photographing. Her passion for the natural world has grown into a lifelong commitment to inspire others to explore, respect, and preserve the beauty of our fragile planet. Using this same passion and drive, she overcame a decade of obstacles and was finally able to realize her dream of living in Kenya. This book is a gift to celebrate.

Piper's photographs are licensed by Getty Images top collections. Featured articles of her work have been printed in national publications such as; National Geographic Traveler, Outdoor Photographer, Nature Photographer, Ranger Finder, and Selamata, as well as, local travel and online magazines. Her images have graced the pages of Nature's Best, National Geographic, National Geographic Explorer, WWF calendars, birders and numerous travel publications. Her images have been on exhibit at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington DC, The Museum of History and Industry in Seattle Washington, The Art Wolfe gallery, The G2 Gallery and are hanging in private collections. She is on the Gura Gear Pro Team.

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MAASAI MARA

A gentle wind blows across the plains as prides of lions lie in the shade of the acacias, waiting in anticipation. On the horizon, a dust cloud gathers as thousands of wildebeest thunder through the tall grasses of the Maasai Mara; the migration has arrived. During the migration season, the Maasai Mara is arguably the greatest wildlife photography experience in the world. Immortalized by countless wildlife films, the renowned Maasai Mara needs little introduction. The vast open plains are home to large prides of lions, cheetahs, leopards, elephants, black Rhino, hippos, Maasai giraffes, common zebra, gnu, impala, thompson's and grant's gazelles, topi, hartebeest, black-backed jackal, spotted hyena and more. It is the lushest reserve in Africa and homeland of the Maasai tribe.

The Maasai, icons of Kenya, once dominated the plains of East Africa and are among the last great warrior cultures. Dressed in bright red shukas, colorful beaded jewelry, a short steel sword in a leather guard at the waist, sandals made from old tires, and long braids covered in red ocher, the warriors stand tall and proud. The women wear vibrant printed kongas with loads of beads hanging from their necks, ears, and heads. Traditionally, they depended on their cattle, following the rain throughout the vast land in search of water and food. Now, they are able to capitalize on tourism and development while continually trying to preserve their ways in an increasingly modern world.



Vulture flying to the top of an acacia tree at sunset.



Notch, the most notorious lion of the Mara and head of the Marsh Pride, was made famous by the BBC's Big Cat Diaries series. RIP.



Lioness scouting its prey.



On the prowl; top—lioness, bottom—leopard.



Three mongooses at sunrise. Hippo in the Marsh pond.



Lilac-breasted roller in flight; the most beautiful bird in Africa.



Maasai Tribe at sunrise.



Wildebeest racing towards the Mara River.



The wildebeest herd thundering towards and through the Mara River.



Zebras racing across the Mara River.



The great migration crossing the Mara River.



Maasai at sunset.



African rains on the Mara plains.



Male lion shaking the rain out of his thick, black mane.



On the hunt; leopard.



The breath of the lioness glows, as she crosses through the wet grasses at sunrise.



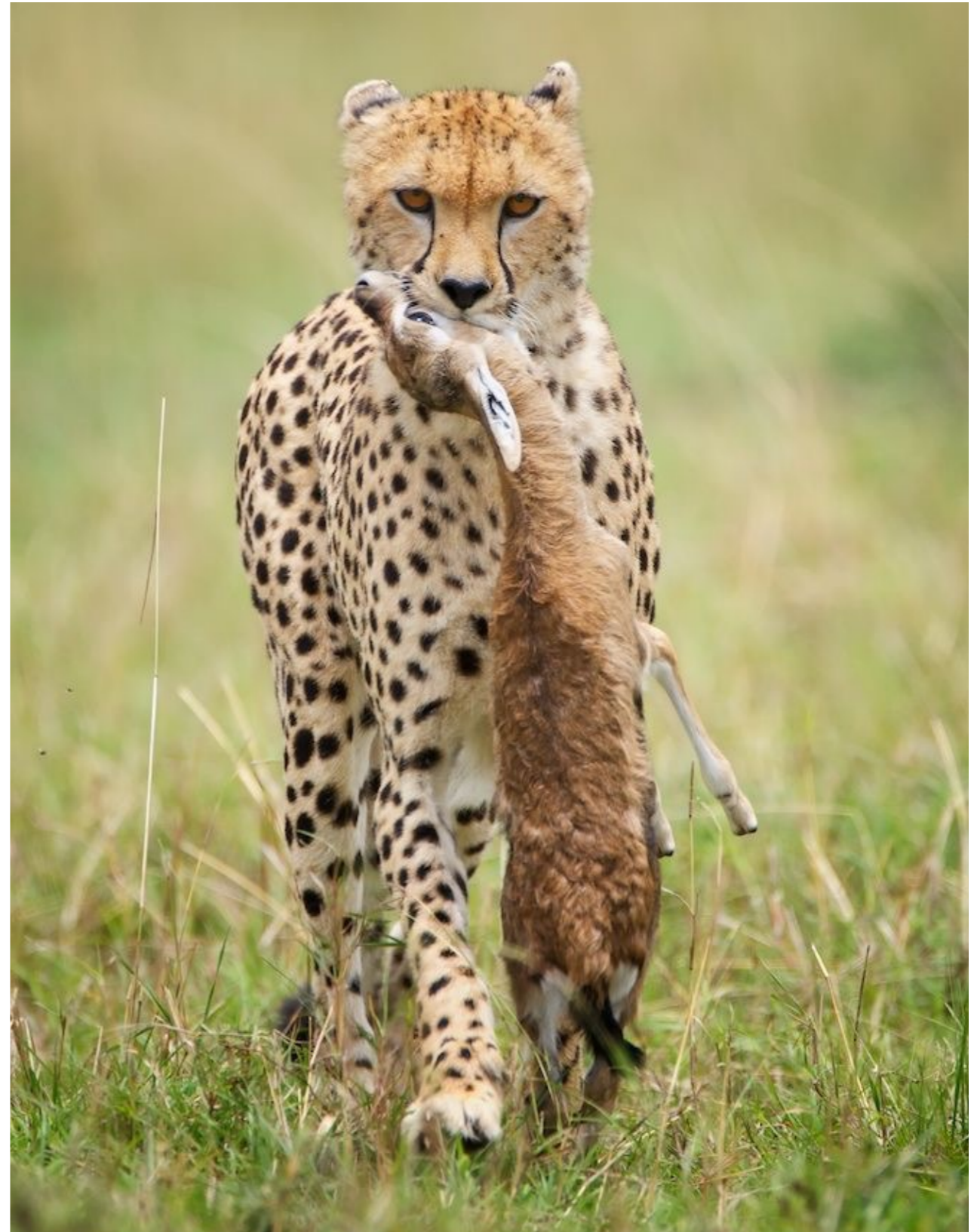
Two male impala in morning light.



The cheetah is the fastest land animal, clocking speeds up to 70MPH. They are on the endangered list as their numbers are below 10,000.



A cheetah on the hunt, being followed by some pesky, opportunistic jackals.



The circle of life; cheetah with cub, cheetah hunting.



Critically endangered black rhino.



Yellow-throated Longclaw about to take flight.



Hot air balloons floating over the Maasai Mara at sunrise.



Maasai herding cattle along the border of the Maasai Mara.



Lionesses with their cubs. A young lioness is dragging a kill with cubs in tow.



Close-up of a young lioness dragging a kill.



A lioness with her cub.



The beauty of a female lion.



A baby elephant, less than three months old, under the belly of its mother.



Great sighting of a leopard just before sunset.



An elder Maasai next to a young Maasai bride.



Another great day on safari in the Maasai Mara.

LAKE NAKURU

Framed by stunning yellow acacia trees, Lake Nakuru is known the world over for the millions of migrating pink flamingos who feed on the water's algae and nest along its shore. In recent years, the water has risen to levels not seen in half a century. At first it was believed that the flooding was due to reforestation in the Mau. It was later discovered that all the all rift valley lakes water levels had been rising; seismic activity is now suspected. This flooding has reduced the salinity of the water, reducing the main food source, causing the flamingos to migrate elsewhere, though some flocks have started to return. However, Lake Nakuru is so much more than its flamingos, and boasts another 450 species of birds and 56 species of mammals.

Near to the water's edge sits a magnificent Euphorbia forest, the largest in Africa. Imagine coming around the bend to discover a tower of beautiful Rothschild's giraffe coming through the yellow acacia trees: the only place in the country where they can be found. More intriguing is to enter the lush forest in search of the rare tree-climbing lions. Leopards also roam through this forest. A sanctuary for both the white rhino and critically endangered black rhino, Lake Nakuru is one of the best places to see them in all of Africa. Often, you may see as many as a dozen white rhinos gathered together. From the rocky escarpments to the lush forest, the park is stunning year-round.



A Rothschild's giraffe is out for a stroll on a stormy morning.



A flock of lesser flamingos, Lake Nakuru.



Flamingos moving in a group on Lake Nakuru.



Mating ritual of the lesser flamingos.



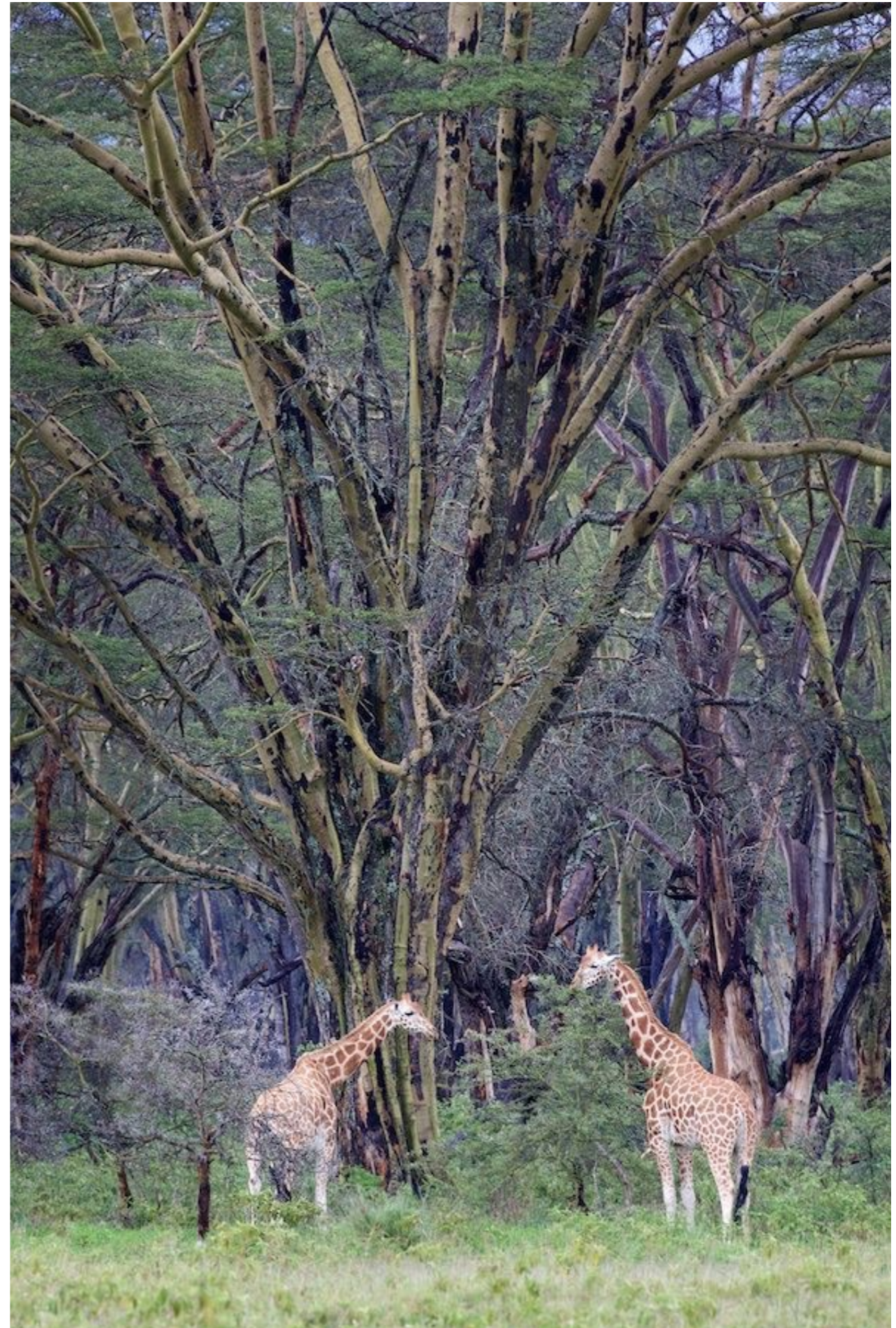
Cape buffalo, one of the most dangerous animals in Africa.



Call to the wild; olive baboon.



Rothschild's giraffes, browsing acacia leaves, along the forest.





A Cape buffalo is grazing in the lush landscape of Lake Nakuru.



A harem of impala in the lush setting of Lake Nakuru.



A couple of white rhino grazing with the Cape buffalo.



Portrait of a black rhino.



Portrait of two white rhinos.

SAMBURU

Filled with large, iconic umbrella acacia trees in a stunning arid environment, the Samburu Reserve evokes the traditional vision of “I Dream of Africa.” North of the equator, this stark, remote wilderness stretches towards the Chalbi desert, a place of baked reddish-brown earth and parched vegetation. In the stillness of what seems like an empty land, one might hear the rustle of brush as a cheetah makes herself known. Roaming through this primal land are the mane-less lions, rare exotic Gravy’s Zebra, soil-stained red elephants, reticulated giraffes, and Oryx. Lined with the dramatic Doom Palms, the Ewaso Nyiro River runs through this barren landscape and is the main water source for life.

In stark contrast to this dry neutral landscape wanders the vivid semi-nomadic Samburu tribe. They were originally part of the Maasai Tribe, but when they came down the Nile, some of the people split off in this area and became known as the Samburu; the butterfly people. They are more colorful in their dress and ornamentation: mesmerizing to the eyes. They struggle to maintain traditions as the modern world encroaches upon them in their daily fight for survival in one of the harshest environments of Kenya.



Samburu warrior standing under an umbrella acacia tree at sunrise



Samburu warrior starting a fire.



A herd of elephants dusting themselves with the red earth.



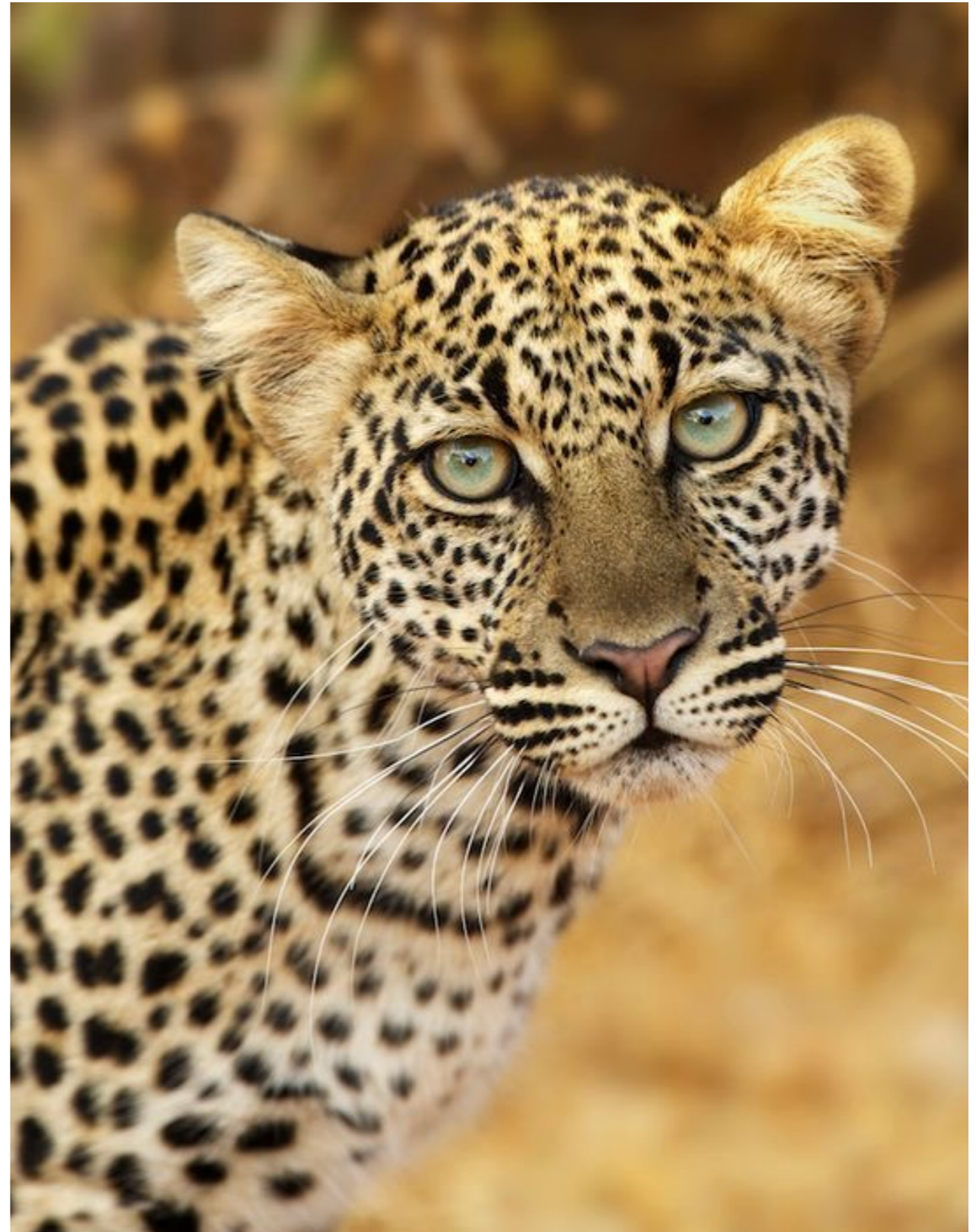
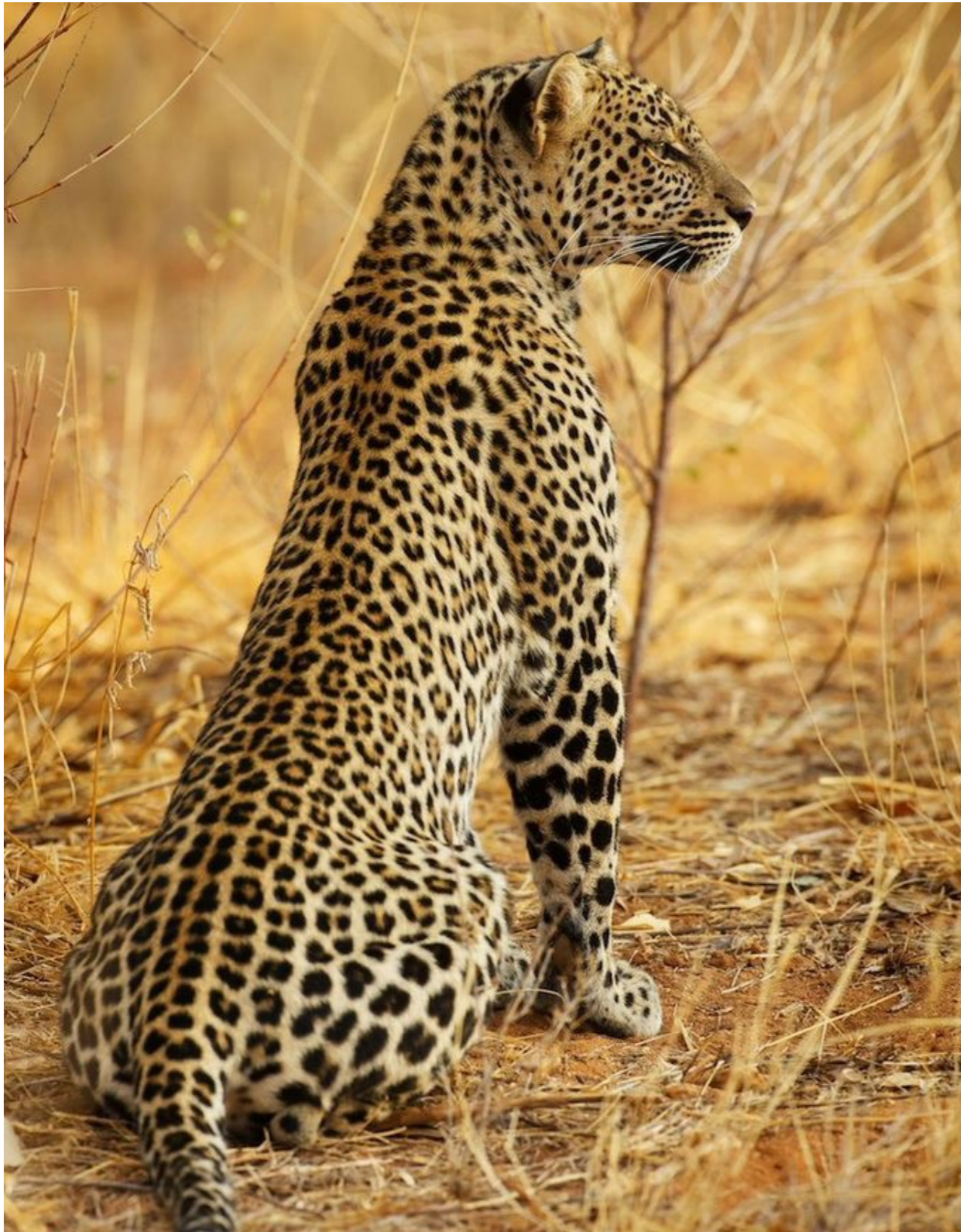
Elephants drinking from the Ewaso Nyiro River, the main water source in Samburu.



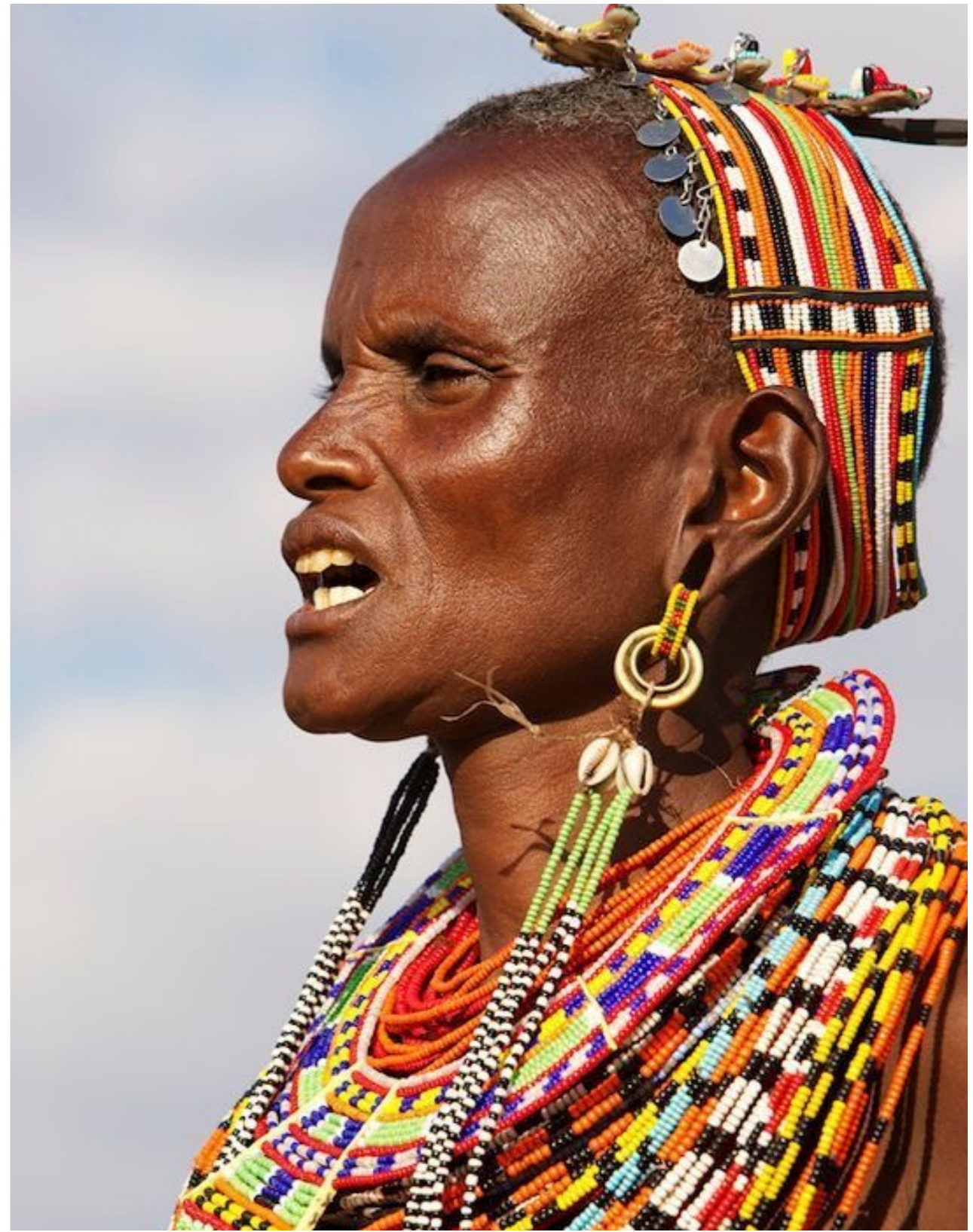
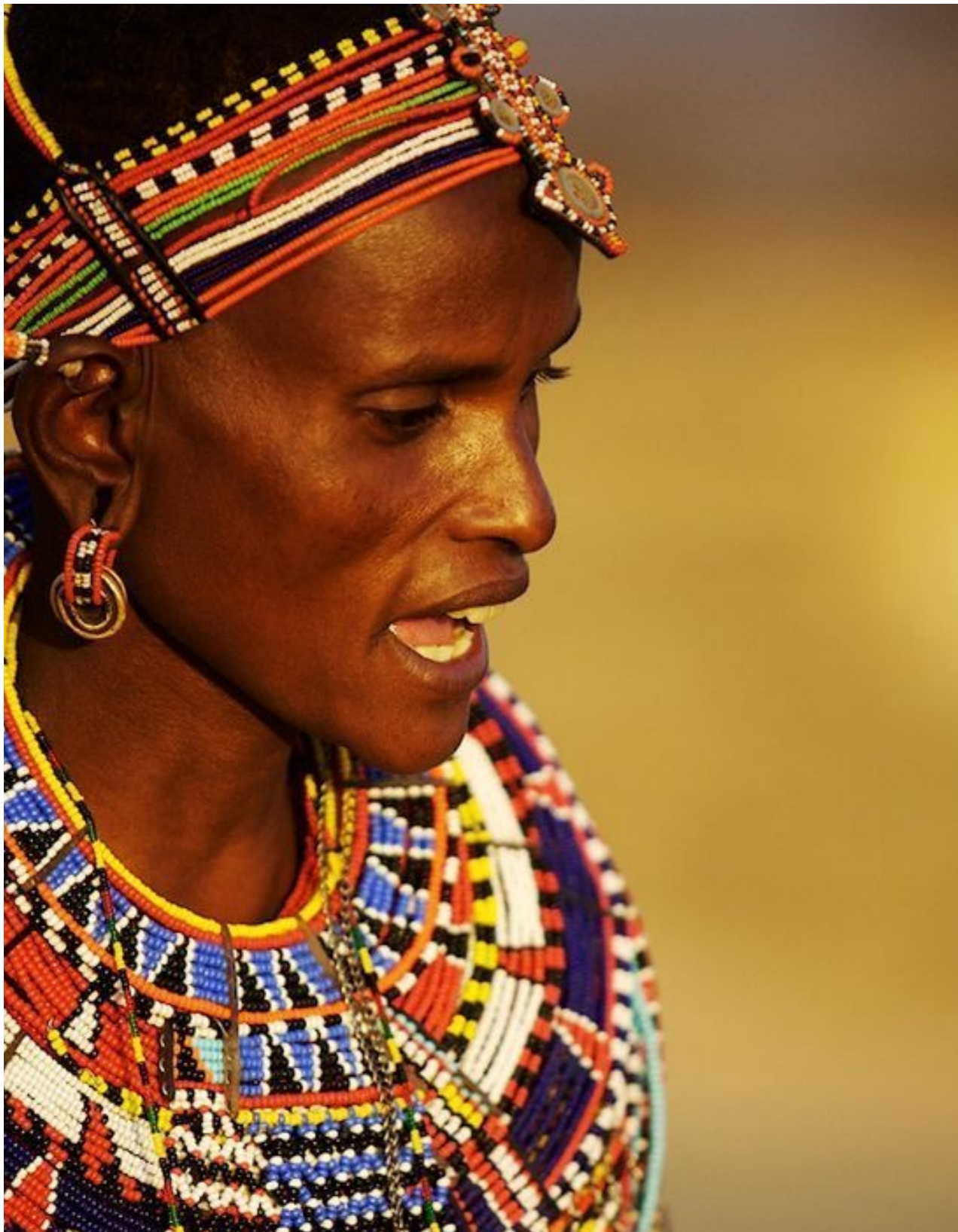
A tower of reticulated giraffes crossing the Ewaso Nyiro River.



The rare exotic Grévy's zebra wandering the dry savannas.



A young leopard scouting for food.



This is Namparish of the Mepukori in Village Samburu. The first images was taken in August 2005, the later in August 2014.



Two crowned cranes fishing in the Ewaso Nyiro River



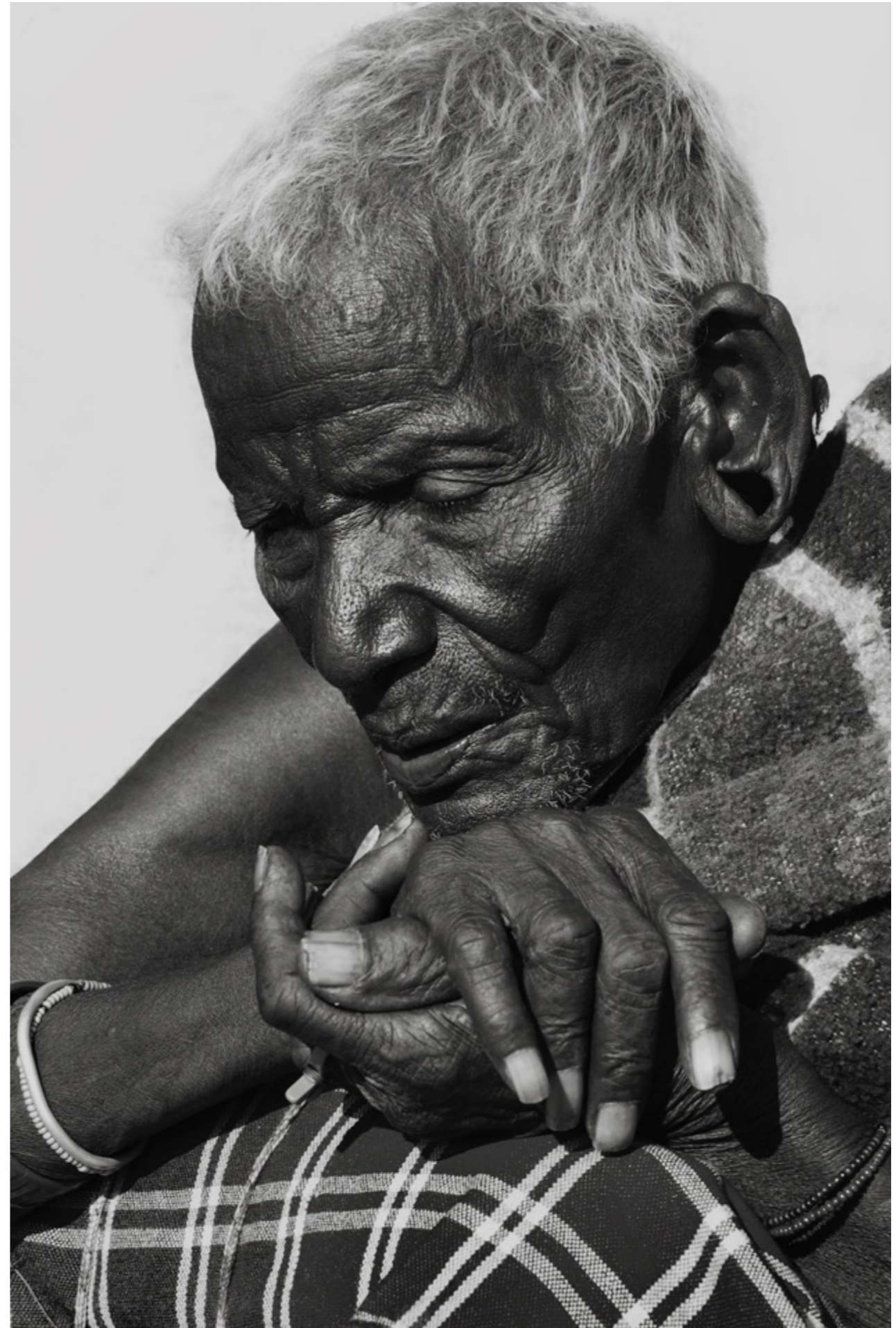
Olive baboons keeping watch along the Ewaso Nyiro River



Samburu woman wondering about their future.



Mzee lesutia, an elder of the Mepukori Village , in Samburu





Umbrella acacia tree, filled with weavers nest, against the dark, dramatic sky.



Above the leopard is keeping watch on a nearby lion; an hour later she relaxes.



A maneless male lion. The manes of the lions of Samburu resemble a Mohawk; this is due to the hot, arid climate. Because food sources are limited, the males participate more in hunting.



Leopard on the prowl.



Oryx wandering through the tall grasses; found in arid climates such as Samburu.



Reticulated giraffe browsing on the leaves of the acacia.



Samburu singing at sunrise



Lekupanay, a samburu warrior, of the Mepukori Village, singing.



Sunrise in Samburu is always spectacular.

AMBOSELI

At the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, dust devils dance across the vast open plains of Amboseli National Park. A place of big skies, dramatic clouds, and far horizons, it is a fine art wildlife photographer's dream location. During the dry season, when Amboseli's swamplands are the only source of water for miles, concentrated numbers of wildlife gravitate to these life-sustaining refuges. The densely packed herds attract an array of predators, including cheetahs, lions, hyena, and the rare leopard.

The image of big-tusked elephants or towers of giraffe set against the backdrop of Mt Kilimanjaro has made the area one of Africa's most memorable landscapes. It is estimated that over 1,000 elephants and 58 matriarchal families trample over this barren wilderness. The real mystery of Amboseli

lies in its unique ability to transform itself throughout the day from blue skies, to dramatic clouds, or fierce dust storms causing a complete white out.

Amboseli is also home to the Maasai and a pasture for their cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys. Recognizing that the protection of its wildlife depended on the Maasai as caretakers, a portion of the park's revenues is shared with the community to win their support for wildlife conservation. Established in 1974, Amboseli was the first park to enlist communities in conservation. However, their livelihoods are both at risk with growing populations, the spread of farms, towns and villages, and poaching; the fragile circle of life hangs in the balance of modernization.



A lone bull elephant grazing in the savannas of Amboseli.



Zebras sparring in the dust.



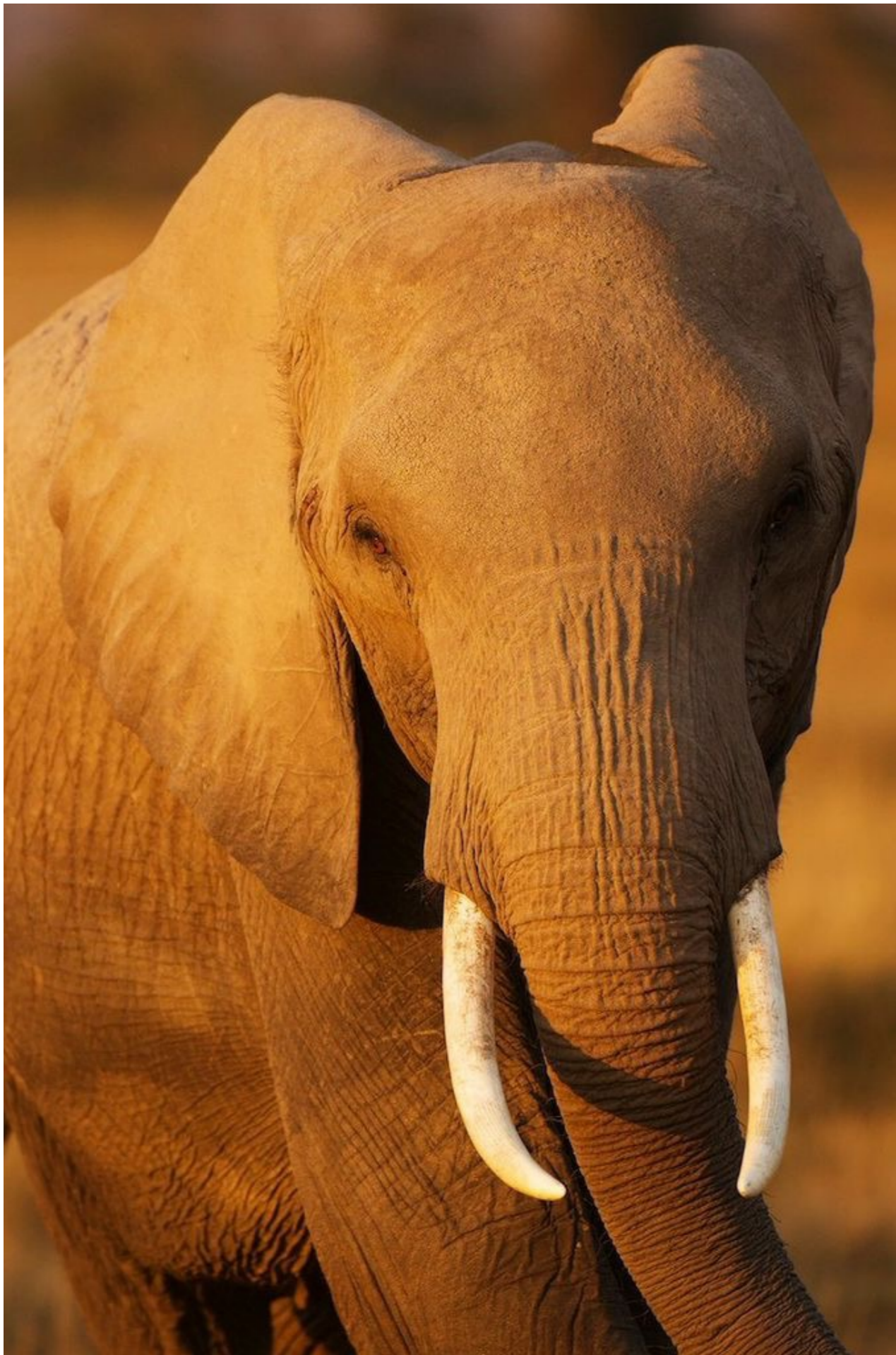
Zebra returning to the hills at the bottom of Mount Kilimanjaro.



A dust devil dancing across the open plains.



A herd of elephants on the march towards the swamps.



Portrait of an elephant in early morning light. The poaching of elephants for their ivory has escalated to record numbers. There are many great organizations working around the clock to protect them. See the last page of this book for more information.



Zebras heading from the hills, towards the open plains, at sunrise.



A giraffe walking across the open plains at sunrise.



A scavenger, this hyena is running off with piece of a wildebeest.



Herd of elephants strolling the endless plains with a dirt devil dancing in the background.



A couple of ostrich and wildebeest baring the white-out dust storm ravaging the plains.



A herd of zebra coming through the dust storm.



On the move. A young zebra runs through the dusty plains.



The Lion King strolls across the savanna just after sunrise.



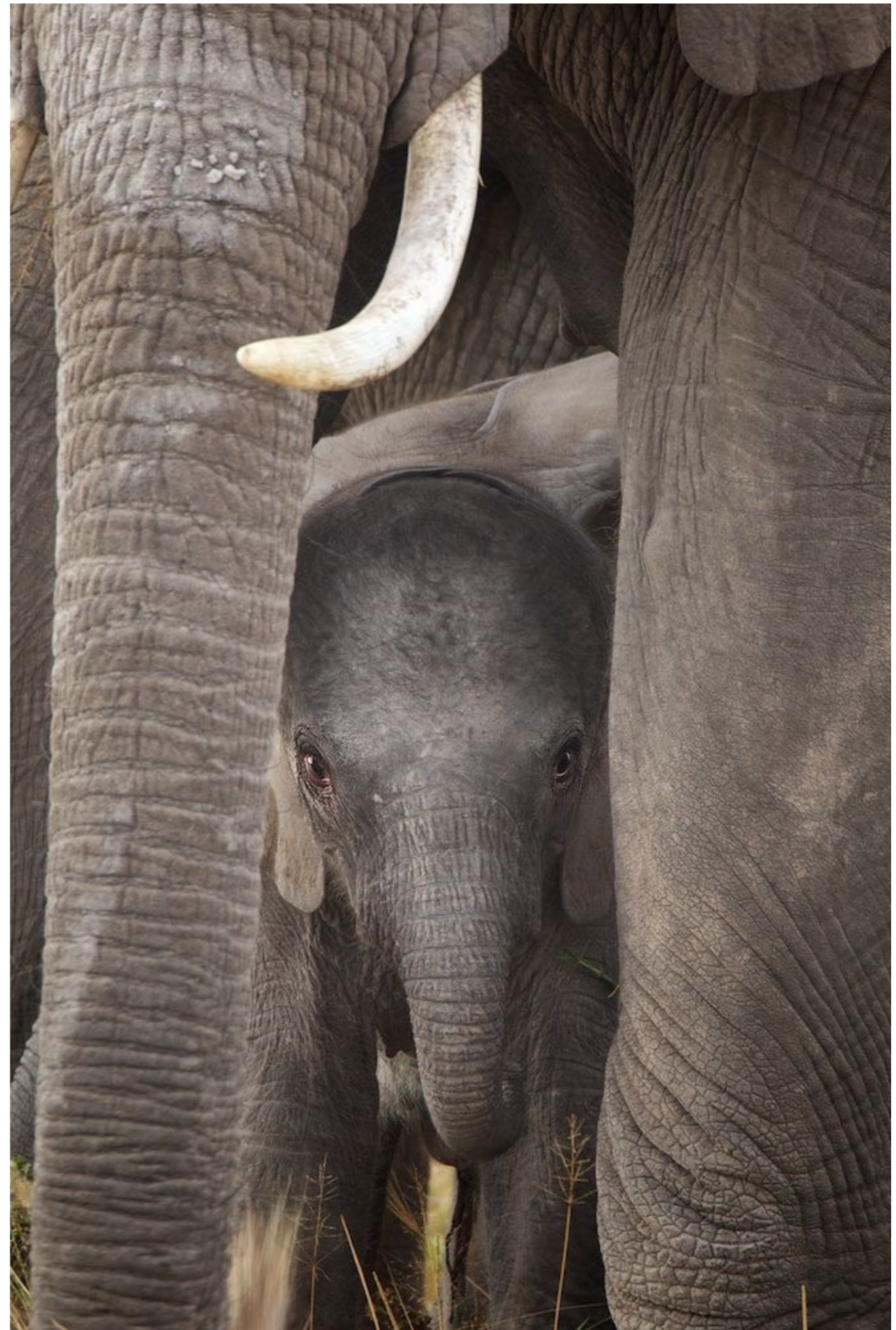
Herd of zebra kicking up the dust.



Elephants dusting themselves as they cross the savanna.



A one-day-old baby elephant peeks out from under its mum's belly. This baby still had the umbilical cord attached.





Heading home. The elephants head toward the foothills for the night.

AFRICAN SAFARI

Take an exotic adventure to an exotic land

Life was made for seeking adventure: take a road trip, book a flight, get out in nature, explore a new destination, and remember what makes your heart race. Piper Mackay, based in Nairobi, Kenya, leads small groups of 6-8 participants on both photographic wildlife safaris and cultural tours throughout Kenya. She also leads private safaris and can design a special itinerary specific to your goals.

2016 Safaris

TANZANIA AND KENYA - February 2016

This exciting safari takes you to the legendary Serengeti in Tanzania, during the birthing season of the migration, and then to the famous Maasai Mara in Kenya, during what is known as the “Big Cat Season.”

BIG CATS SAFARI - March 2016

This time of year has become known as the “Big Cat Season,” and is one of the best-kept secrets in Africa. This is the off-season in Kenya, when the migration is down south in Tanzania along with the tourists, but the predators remain behind, hungry. This allows us to spend quality time with these big cats, virtually undisturbed.

TURKANA FESTIVAL AND WILDLIFE SAFARI - May/June 2016

This photographic adventure is built around one of the most breathtaking tribal festivals in the world, while also visiting two of the top wildlife reserves in Kenya, and driving across the spectacular, legendary Chalbi Desert.

BEST OF KENYA - August 2016

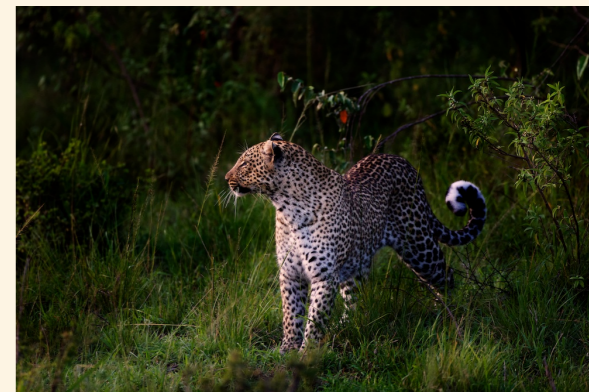
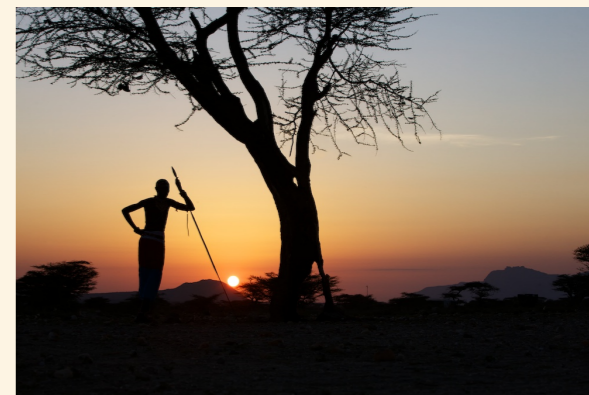
This multiple-location safari is designed to take you into the heart of Kenya’s best photographic regions during the migration season. This safari is a great mix of exotic wildlife, dramatic ecosystems, and ancient cultures.

GREAT MIGRATION SAFARI - August 2016

The Maasai Mara, during the migration, is arguably one of the greatest wildlife photography experiences on the planet. This takes the traditional migration photo safari to the next level by offering multiple locations in the Mara: staying on both sides of the Mara River and in a private conservancy.

What Stories do you want to tell when looking back on the foot prints of your life?

DETAILS - <http://www.pipermackayphotography.com/programs/>



LAKE TURKANA

Driving across the majestic Chalbi desert toward the Turkana Basin is a surreal experience. It is the largest permanent dry desert lake in the world; a salty pan surrounded by lava with such incredible mirages you feel as though you are about to drive into a lake. Slowly, you will begin to see the herds of camels, which will increase dramatically as you near the oasis at the bottom of the lava hills. Camels represent a sign of wealth to the tribes in the Northern region, just as cattle are to the Maasai and Samburu tribes. Dropping into the lower basin, through the lava ridges, the first glance of Lake Turkana takes your breath away.

This is the most culturally rich tribal region in Kenya. Where there is water, there is life. Lake Turkana, including the Ethiopian portion, hosts a large, diverse group of ethnic/tribal people who have been semi-shielded from the modernization in a place that still feels raw, natural, and somewhat timeless. Festivals are held several times throughout the year uniting the tribes living throughout the basin: Rendile, Samburu, Turkana, Dassanach Gabra, Borana, El Molo, Konso, Sakure, Garee, and Waata. They gather in a kaleidoscope of color, dazzling to the eyes, mind, and soul. It is here that you will experience a powerful glimpse into another world.



The Turkana tribe heading home, along the shores of Lake Turkana at sunset.



Turkana men heading to the lake at sunrise for a day of fishing.



A Turkana man pulling his boat out onto Lake Turkana.



A Turkana fisherman heading to the village with his catch of the afternoon.



A Gabra woman looking across the vast land of the north.



A Gabra man leading his camel across the desert as he relocates to a new village.



In the north, herds of camel replace herds of cattle due to the harsh climate.



Turkana women in their long leather dresses and mound of beads, lengthening their necks.



Young Turkana girls, covered in ocher, standing in the doorway of their traditional hut.



Portrait of a Rendille woman. The Rendille are closely related to the Samburu. There are about 64,000 Rendille living in Kenya.



Kenya's Daasanach people and Randille tribe dancing to make peace.



Somali women dancing.



Rendille warriors performing a courtship dance.



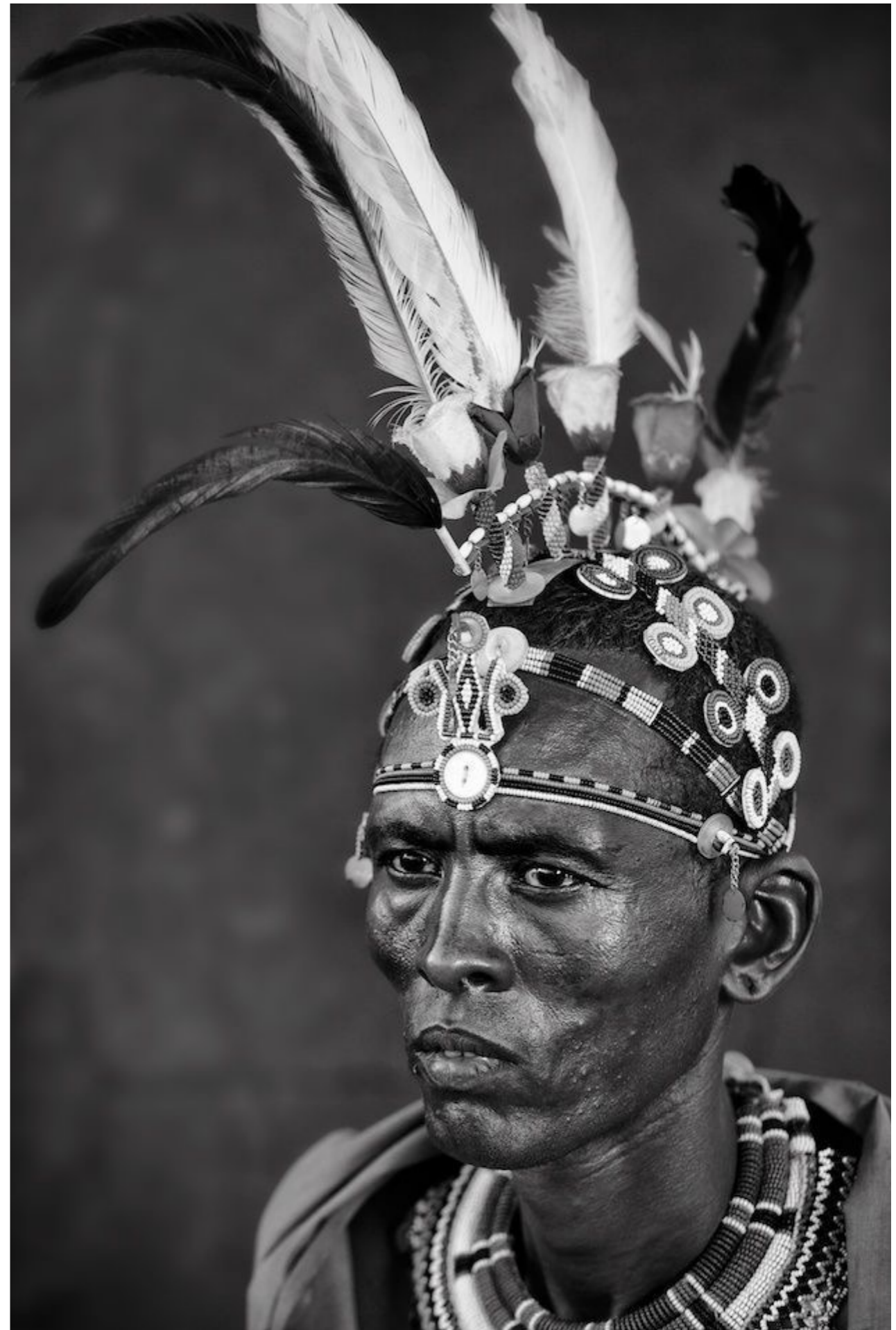
Rendille tribe performing a ceremonial dance.



Rendille warriors heading to the ceremony at sunrise.



Portrait of Roble on his wedding day. Rendille Tribe.

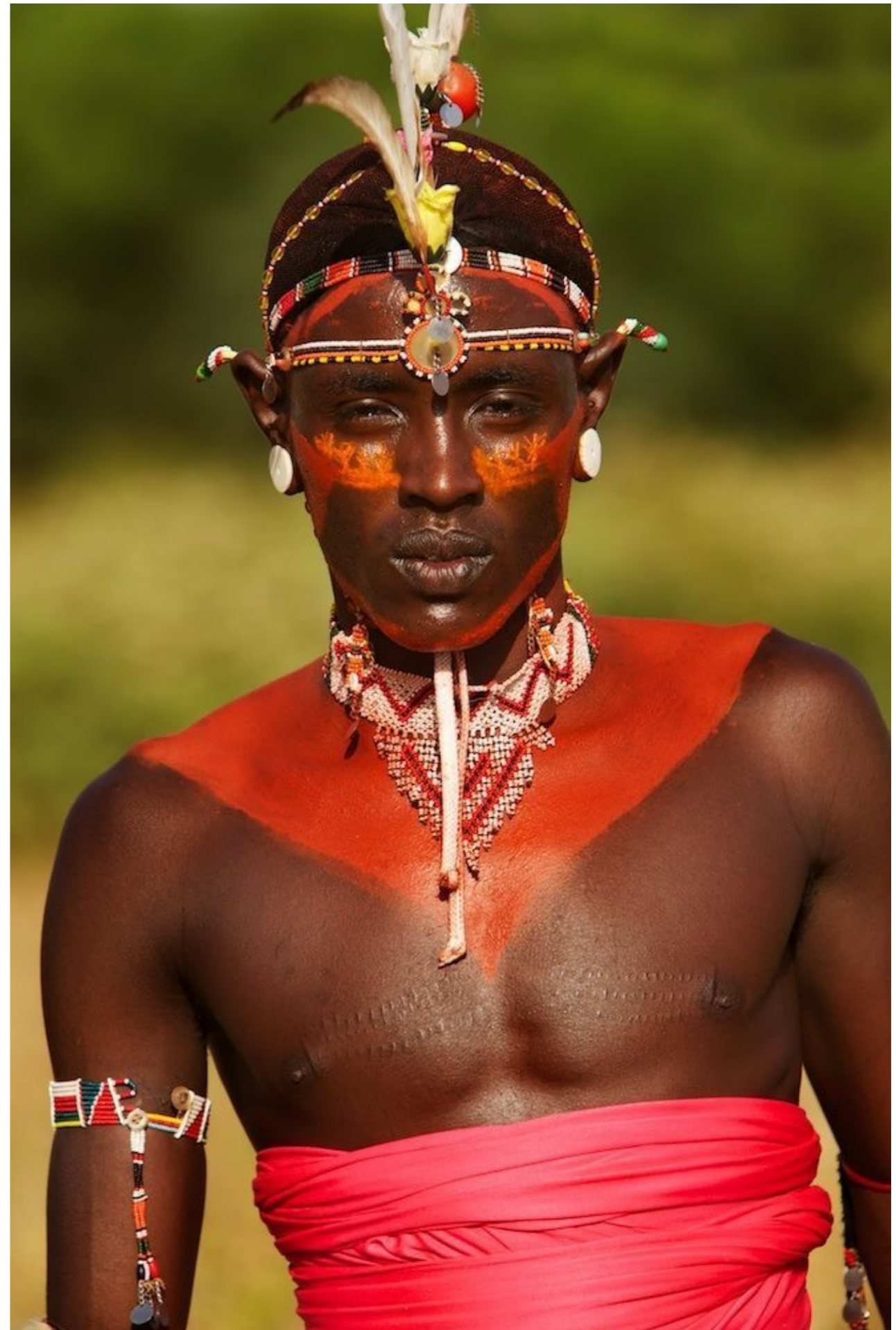




Portraits of the young, exotic Turkana women, not yet married.



The elaborate headpiece worn by the Rendille women during ceremonies.



A Rendille warrior at a wedding.



A silhouette of the modern warrior with his cell phone.



The warrior, an iconic symbol of Kenya and Africa.

HELP PRESERVE WILDLIFE AND TRADITIONAL CULTURES

Here are a few of the many great wildlife and humanitarian organizations helping to save wildlife and preserve traditional cultures that are highly recommend by Piper Mackay



THE SAMBURU PROJECT

An organization that provides easy access to clean, safe drinking water as a foundation to development to communities throughout the Samburu District of Kenya. To date, the Samburu project has drilled 73 wells, bringing clean, safe drinking water to over 70,000 people. Learn more; <http://www.thesamburuproject.org>



THE DAVID SHELDRIK WILDLIFE TRUST

The DSWT has successfully hand-raised over 150 infant elephants and has accomplished its long-term conservation priority by effectively reintegrating orphans back into the wild herds of Tsavo.

Learn more; <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org>



BIG LIFE FOUNDATION

Using innovative conservation strategies and collaborating closely with local communities, partner NGOs, national parks and government agencies, Big Life Foundation seeks to protect and sustain East Africa's wild lands and wildlife, including one of the greatest populations of elephants left in East Africa.

Learn more; <https://biglife.org>