WILDLIFE RANGER CHALLENGE



4 TEAMMATES
21 KM
ONE MISSION

19TH SEPTEMBER 2026

UGANDA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY
UWA

Tusk

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Welcome from the **Executive Director** Uganda Wildlife Authoriry

Last year was my first Wildlife Ranger Challenge and, as the new Executive Director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority. The event is a wonderful opportunity to meet you all.

I am delighted to welcome you back to Murchison Falls National Park, hosted by Chief Warden Kizza Fred and his hardworking team, for the Wildlife Ranger Challenge. Since my first Challenge last year, UWA has merged with the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre, recruited and is training 1,300 new rangers, and reintroduced rhinos to Kidepo Valley National Park.

Our longstanding partner, the Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF), brings us together to celebrate our rangers' professionalism and commitment, combining competition, teamwork and fun. Established by Tusk and the Game Rangers Association of Africa, with HRH Prince William, Prince of Wales, as Patron, the Challenge unites ranger teams across more than 100 protected areas.

UCF's support extends beyond this event. During COVID, it supplied ranger food, maintained and fuelled patrol vehicles and boats, provided veterinary equipment, and helped keep ranger posts operational. We remain deeply grateful for this close, continuing partnership.
Several current and former UCF volunteer Directors have also served as Honorary Wildlife Officers: Lilly Ajarova, Andrew Roberts, Tom Okello, George Owosegyrie and Michael Keigwin.

Today belongs to our rangers. Enjoy the competition, Murchison Falls and the friendship of your colleagues. I look forward to getting to know more about you.

Thank you to our rangers and partners for protecting Uganda's wildlife and wild places. We are proud of you and grateful for your dedication.

Good luck to every team, and enjoy the Challenge!

Dr James Musinguzi
Executive Director
Uganda Wildlife Authority



FRIDAY 18th

12:00 pm	Arrival & Check in
04:00 pm	Participants' WRC bag weight check, and briefing
05:30 pm	Driver and safety car briefing
06:00 pm	Additional briefing at Red Chilli

SATURDAY 19th

05:30 am	Meet at Pakuba Airstrip
06:15 am	Race Starts
09:00 am	Breakfast provided at the finishline + refreshments
11:00 am	Award Ceremony
06:00 pm	BBQ at Paraa Student's Center & Red Chilli

SUNDAY 20th

08:00 am	Check out & Departure from Murchison Falls NP

UGANDA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION IN ACTION

UWA
Conserving for Generations

Tusk



Welcome.....

Welcome to the 2026 Wildlife Ranger Challenge!
During COVID-19, UCF adapted its role, as collapsing tourism revenue reduced UWA's ability to operate.

UCF provided rangers with food, clothing, equipment, fuel and veterinary drugs, and maintained vehicles and boats. This helped UWA reduce human–wildlife conflict and poaching in Queen Elizabeth, Murchison Falls and Kidepo National Parks, assist communities and keep parks healthy for tourism's return.

Our commitment to UWA spans over 25 years. With Connected Conservation Foundation, EarthRanger /Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence, the Game Rangers' Association of Africa and many others, UCF's conservation development network is pursuing Collaborative Management Partnerships with UWA in these parks.

UCF embraces the President of Uganda's determination to expand tourism, grow GDP and generate hundreds of thousands of tourism jobs. This depends on UWA's landscape and wildlife protection. Sectors such as Kiba offer rare tourism expansion opportunities and must remain pristine to attract investment and underpin prosperity.
Queen Elizabeth's men won in 2020, Murchison Falls in 2021 and Ziwa in 2022. Since then, Kidepo has won both the men's and ladies' trophies! Enough, say their rivals!
UCF ensures men's and ladies' prize money is equal: UGX 1 million first, UGX 600,000 second and UGX 400,000 third.

Teams include;

- UWA: Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth, Kidepo Valley, Kibale, Bwindi and Pian Upe.
- anctuary and community teams: Ziwa, Morungole and Naperetom Conservancies, and Karamoja's Lion Scouts.
- Sponsors and friends: Old Fogies, Crazy Cats, Toyota Buffaloes, NBL Uganda Rugby, Engineering Solutions, Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Kampala Limp-Along Crew, Team Gorillos and the Kidepo Lions.

For some, intact toenails are prize enough!
Thanks to UWA, rangers, sponsors, partners and participants for strengthening ranger welfare, training and operations.
We're launching www.ugandacf.org! Follow our blog, newsletter and social media. Exciting times!
Support your teammates, and give Kidepo something to worry about!

Michael Keigwin MBE
CEO, Uganda Conservation Foundation
Honorary Warden Uganda Wildlife Authority.



Keith Roberts
In Solidarity with Rangers

I have been actively involved in the Wildlife Ranger Challenge (WRC) since its inception in 2020, as a co-founder alongside Natural State, Tusk Trust and the Game Rangers' Association of Africa.

The WRC was born in extraordinary circumstances. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa's wildlife rangers, the men and women standing on the front line of conservation, were facing a crisis of their own. With tourism and vital conservation funding collapsing, basic welfare needs such as salaries, uniforms, medical and life insurance, equipment and training were suddenly at risk.

The consequences were potentially devastating. Without rangers, there can be no effective protection of Africa's protected areas, wildlife and wild places.

But rangers are far more than the uniform they wear or the role they perform. They are conservation professionals, protectors, educators, first responders and trusted members of the communities around them. They work in some of the most challenging environments imaginable, often far from their families, and carry enormous responsibility on behalf of all of us who value Africa's natural heritage.

The International Ranger Federation's State of the Ranger Report and the work of the Game Rangers' Association of Africa continue to remind us that, despite their vital role, rangers still face significant challenges around welfare, safety, resources, training, recognition and professional development. Supporting rangers is therefore not simply about supporting conservation, it is about recognising and investing in the people who make conservation possible.

Having worked as a ranger, trained and mentored rangers, and been involved in supporting ranger teams for much of my life, the WRC is deeply personal to me. I have seen first-hand the professionalism, courage, humour and resilience that define this extraordinary community. To see the WRC grow from an emergency response into a continent-wide movement celebrating and supporting rangers has been a tremendous privilege.

It is an equal privilege to be here in Uganda, representing the WRC and standing alongside the UWA, UCF and, above all, the rangers who dedicate themselves every day to protecting Uganda's wildlife and wild places.

To UWA's rangers: thank you. Your professionalism, dedication and service deserve our deepest respect.

To UCF: my heartfelt thanks for hosting this regional hub event and for creating an opportunity for the wider public to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those on the conservation front line.

And to everyone taking part: run with pride, run with purpose, enjoy yourselves and have fun, but remember that every step is a show of solidarity with Africa's rangers.

Keith Roberts

WRC Co-Founder, Organiser & Judge



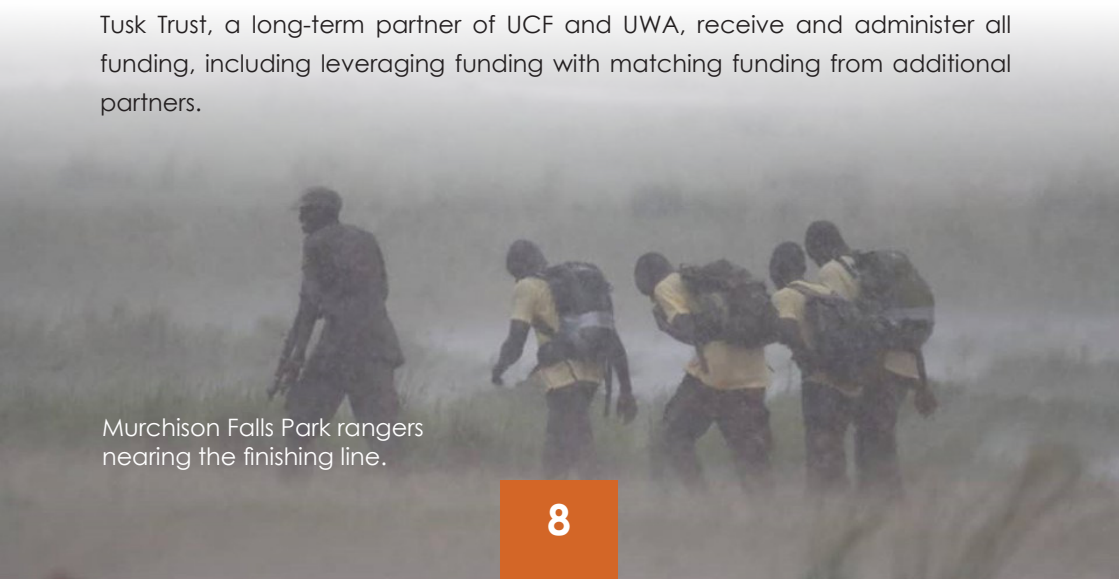
WILDLIFE RANGER CHALLENGE

About **The Wildlife Ranger Challenge**

Across Africa, over 200 ranger teams will run simultaneously to raise awareness and vital funding for wildlife conservation, including ranger welfare, managing human-wildlife conflict, anti-poaching patrols, veterinary interventions, and community scouts. In Uganda, the Wildlife Ranger Challenge is held in Murchison Falls National Park, attracting teams from across UWA and partners. Teams of four, each carrying 22kg on their backs, will race through the 21km course, starting from the Pakuba Airstrip to the hippo pool on the Delta. The rivalry between each park is hot! Kidepo Valley National Park has won the last two years, the other teams are promising to end the winning streak this year!

Alongside the main ranger race, fun and corporate teams participate in solidarity with the formal ranger challenge teams. This includes the Old Fogeys team who to date has somewhat surprisingly finished every race. At the finishing line, participants and supporters enjoy a safari breakfast on the Delta, a short prize giving, and in the evening, the rangers enjoy a fun barbeque and dance with a bull donated by the Executive Director of UWA. Prince William is Patron and a founder of the race, set up during COVID to support rangers and operations throughout that difficult time.

Tusk Trust, a long-term partner of UCF and UWA, receive and administer all funding, including leveraging funding with matching funding from additional partners.



Murchison Falls Park rangers nearing the finishing line.

Last Year







Kidepo Valley National Park won both the male and female categories.

EVENT SPONSORS







OUR PARTNERS

Uganda Conservation Foundation(UCF)
Project updates

Park Recovery

For 30 years, UCF and the Uganda Wildlife Authority have worked closely together to protect wildlife and strengthen conservation in Uganda. Today, UCF is moving towards a formal collaborative management partnership with UWA across Kidepo Valley, Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth National Parks. This next chapter builds on practical achievements: UWA leads, while UCF provides funding, specialist expertise and daily support.

In Murchison, that partnership has established fourteen ranger and sector facilities and five Marine Ranger Stations. Ten patrol boats extend protection along the Nile and Lake Albert. Rainwater systems serve fifteen posts, while solar and battery power support ten posts and the Joint Operations Command Centre, keeping vital communications running around the clock.

In Queen Elizabeth, the Katunguru Law Enforcement and Operations Centre brings ranger teams, marine units, veterinary response and park leadership together. Murchison and Queen Elizabeth each organise management across nine sectors, extending protection beyond familiar visitor routes into places where wildlife needs room to recover.

Behind every facility are people learning to lead. Murchison's programme records more than 500 Junior Leadership course participations; over 400 Queen Elizabeth rangers have benefited from leadership and wider training. First aid, human rights, communications and field skills help teams make sound decisions under pressure.

The UWA Training Academy at Lugaya is currently hosting 1,300 new ranger recruits undertaking basic training. Its construction also created technical jobs and apprenticeships for local young people. That investment strengthens the next generation of Uganda's frontline conservation professionals.

The Wildlife Ranger Challenge celebrates the professionalism of those who patrol through danger and respond when wildlife or communities need help. Their commitment deserves safe accommodation, dependable equipment and support that lasts beyond race day.



Protecting Lions, Elephants, Vultures and Giraffes

Murchison's giraffe population has recovered from a few hundred to around 2,000, according to programme estimates. Every gain rests on sustained protection: removing snares, monitoring threatened animals, treating injuries and keeping rangers ready to respond.

In Murchison Falls, Olam, a lion, was rescued from a wheel trap in March during a month-long Kiba Sector operation that removed over 75 wheel traps and more than 200 snares. Sadly, he was later killed in a snare in September. His death was heartbreaking for everyone involved.

In Queen Elizabeth, UCF and UWA responded to 100% of recorded threats to lions without losing a single animal. Tragically, during a training week, the agreed response protocols were not



followed and seven lions were poisoned. Their loss is devastating and reinforces the need for continuous protection and adherence to agreed procedures.

Seven lion protection teams work directly with UWA: two in Queen Elizabeth, three in Murchison Falls and two in Kidepo–Karamoja. Through the operations rooms, satellite collars and EarthRanger connect lion movements with ranger response. Teams use this information to focus protection where it is needed, coordinate action and follow agreed operational procedures.

In Kidepo, Lion Recovery Fund support enabled expansion from one team to two in early 2026. Dedicated vehicles keep teams working alongside UWA every day, protecting lions, their prey and designated recovery areas. Vulture tracking complements this work, revealing movements, connections between landscapes and poisoning risks that threaten lions and scavengers alike.

Recovery also needs water. UCF has supported the restoration of sixteen waterholes in Queen Elizabeth. In Kidepo, hydrological assessments guide waterhole rehabilitation, helping animals withstand dry seasons and utilise more of the park for more of the annual weather cycle. Keeping these habitats safe and accessible gives recovering populations room to grow.

Kidepo and Karamoja Wildlife Recovery

Four rhinos were returned to Kidepo in March 2026. UCF directly supported their move from Ziwa and helped prepare the sanctuary, water supplies, security, communications and monitoring. Training and veterinary review supported the operation from preparation to release. Today, rangers and specialists continue the daily work that gives this return its lasting significance.

Opotipot Ranger Post is complete and operational, providing a permanent

1 million trees planted in communities

Command Centers built in 3 parks

2 digital radio networks established

In 4 parks, all linked directly to HQ Kampala

Over 3000 Rangers trained

3 Vet Respose Vehicles

30 Ranger Posts Built

Over 2000 vet rescues removing snares from animals

50 tonnes of snares & traps recovered



base for UWA patrols and response. Imiliny Ranger Post is under construction, located towards the northern border. Four additional Land Cruisers now support operations in Kidepo and across Karamoja, alongside solar installations and road improvements.

Kidepo's Joint Operations Command Centre, funded through UCF with Global Conservation support, brings UWA, the National Forestry Authority and community conservancies under one roof. Its UWA operations section is fully operational, connecting field reports, wildlife monitoring, investigations and command and control.

At Morungole Community Conservancy, the headquarters and community ranger accommodation are complete. Trained scouts already help remove snares, support rhino sanctuary work and undertake conservation operations. The nursery and training facility is under construction. At Naperatom, scout training continues while accommodation and a borehole are being established.

Dr Richard Lamprey's aerial survey covered the whole Kidepo–Karamoja landscape. Thirty-one satellite-collared elephants across the Uganda–Kenya landscape help guide conflict response. Uganda's first cheetah collaring was successfully achieved and vulture tracking is also strengthening knowledge of vulnerable species.

Around fifty UWA and partner personnel have received wildlife poison management training. Waterhole improvements at Lochorkinae and Kikene Middle draw on recently conducted professional assessments. Together, better training, water, transport and information help teams protect wildlife across this demanding landscape.

EU NaturAfrica and a broad coalition of conservation partners support work connecting parks, community lands and forests across borders. Morungole and Naperatom scouts are also taking part in the Wildlife Ranger Challenge, proudly representing the communities helping shape the region's conservation future.

Veterinary Response and the Next Generation of Wildlife Vets

A snared animal cannot wait. UCF has built and equipped Murchison's veterinary laboratory and provided support via vehicles, medicines, immobilisation equipment and specialist training. The cumulative UCF programme records document more than 4,000 wildlife rescues and interventions to date.

Investing in Ugandan vets keeps expertise close to the animals that need it. In Kidepo, permanent veterinary capacity supports rescues, disease response, collaring and the rhino recovery programme. Mentoring and specialist training deepen those skills, while dedicated transport helps teams reach animals requiring treatment. These skills remain within Uganda's conservation institutions.

The work extends beyond rescue. By



examining injuries, investigating deaths and collecting forensic evidence, vets help UWA identify threats and pursue wildlife crime. Each intervention can save an animal, strengthen an investigation and reveal where protection is needed next.

Community and Regional Development

Over one million indigenous trees have now been planted through UCF's network north of Murchison. Pacer Community Polytechnic links restoration with nursery skills, practical training and opportunities for young people. Conservation becomes part of livelihoods.



The wider community scout programme has supported around 500 young people; thirty recently became bona fide UWA rangers. Approximately forty Pacer and UCF Development Scouts held technical jobs during construction of the UWA Training Academy, including through the COVID period.

In Queen Elizabeth, thirty-four Park Community Committees bring local priorities into conservation. In supported Ishasha communities, elephant trenches, monitoring and community partnerships have helped reduce crop-raiding by approximately 90%, according to programme records. Protecting harvests and opening paths to skilled employment give families tangible reasons to support wildlife recovery.

Illegal Wildlife Trade

Murchison's striking "snare mountain" reveals the scale of the threat. UCF programme records document that more than fifty metric tonnes of wire snares and over 10,000 wheel traps and related trapping implements have been recovered and decommissioned over the previous fifteen years. Every trap removed leaves the landscape safer for wildlife.

Stopping the next crime takes more than a patrol. Working with UWA's Wildlife Crime Unit and specialist partners, UCF supports intelligence gathering, investigations, evidence handling and prosecution. Veterinary forensics and field records help connect individual incidents to wider criminal activity, giving investigators stronger information to work with.

Training in human rights, lawful enforcement and evidence handling supports professional, accountable action. Vehicles, boats, communications and the supply of fuel allow teams to follow through on incidents. When COVID caused tourism revenue to collapse, UCF helped keep rangers deployed and

essential operations moving throughout this difficult period.

That commitment continues through other setbacks. In Kidepo, UCF sustained daily vehicle, fuel, driver and technical support after a UWA vehicle was severely damaged by flooding, helping protection continue when operational capacity was badly stretched.

Prevention also starts with opportunity. Community scouts, apprenticeships, vocational training and local employment all help young people build livelihoods around conservation. Investing in the ranger protecting wildlife and the family seeking a secure income strengthens the same shared future.

UWA Digital Strategy and Conservation Technology

UWA's Digital Strategy is connecting conservation countrywide through EarthRanger. Over 1,000 rangers have been trained to use the system, turning field observations into information that helps managers deploy teams, respond to threats and protect wildlife.

Communications are expanding across the whole of Queen Elizabeth, Murchison Falls and Kidepo–Karamoja, including LoRaWAN, a network supporting wildlife tracking and sensors. Links to UWA's Kampala operations room give leadership access to information from the parks, improving situational awareness, analytics and reporting. Managers can see what is happening, assess patterns and coordinate actions across departments.

Thanks to Off Grid Consulting and Connected Conservation Foundation, UCF is helping UWA build and sustain this network. UWA owns and controls its data. Training, maintenance and connectivity keep the technology working for the people who depend on it, from remote patrols to leadership.

The next chapter of this ongoing process will build on these gains through formal collaboration, the continued development of skilled Ugandan professionals and through other dependable support. At the Wildlife Ranger Challenge 2026, we celebrate the women and men who make conservation possible. Stand with them and help sustain the human protection element behind every rescue, every recovering population and every day in the field.



WILDLIFE RANGER CHALLENGE

Stand With Rangers
Invest in Africa's Future.

STILL WANT TO SUPPORT?

- Donate directly at:
  www.ugandacf.org/WRC2026
- **Scan the QR code to pledge support**
- Sponsor gear, fuel, vet kits or a scout unit

Every day, rangers protect extraordinary wildlife and landscapes, support communities and safeguard our shared heritage for future generations. The Wildlife Ranger Challenge brings us together to stand alongside them.

Organised by Tusk Trust and the Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA), the Challenge has raised over US$25 million since 2020, supporting approximately 11,500 rangers across 24 countries.

These rangers protect more than 58 million hectares, while funding benefits over 500,000 people.
More than 2,000 rangers from over 110 protected areas typically unite for the Challenge—a powerful expression of courage, teamwork and shared purpose.

Simple Essentials. Real Impact.

Boots for the next patrol. A raincoat when the weather turns. Clean drinking water. A medical kit when it matters most.



WRC funding translates into hundreds of thousands of essential items that help rangers carry out their demanding work. Look after the rangers. They are the foundation of everything we protect.

A Movement Gathering Momentum

The race is part of a much bigger movement. GRAA and the International Ranger Federation advance professional standards and ranger welfare, while United for Wildlife mobilises action against wildlife trafficking.

The Ranger Welfare and Standards Initiative aims to give 10,000 rangers access to insurance. Tusk Trust reported that 6,000 were insured during the initiative's first year, providing reassurance for rangers and their families.

Uganda's Talent. Uganda's Future.

Across the private, public and academic sectors, a talented generation is bringing fresh leadership, management expertise and protected area skills to conservation.

The Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF) invests in Uganda's own workforce, helping professionals realise the extraordinary opportunities in conservation, development and tourism. We measure every project by what endures after it ends: capable people, stronger institutions and lasting results.

UCF has an extensive track record of supporting the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Government of Uganda, with a strong focus on savannah conservation. We combine effective fieldwork with trusted management, guided by the leadership of our Trustees and Directors. Our purpose remains clear: to help UWA succeed.

Kidepo Shows What Is Possible

Our partnership with UWA in Kidepo demonstrates the power of sustained commitment. Building on five years of investment, support includes the EU's NaturAfrica programme and a new five-year funding agreement with Busch Gardens, Global Conservation and other partners.

Together, we are strengthening wildlife protection, creating opportunities for communities and tourism, and laying the foundations for further growth.

Help Write Uganda's Next Chapter

Murchison Falls was once Africa's most visited national park, renowned for its remarkable concentrations of wildlife. That history reminds us of Uganda's extraordinary potential.

UC brings government leaders, businesses and diplomats together, building friendships and support to help realise that potential. Progress requires political commitment, dependable funding and communities at the heart of conservation and development. Success must deliver tangible benefits that sustain local support across generations.

By joining the Challenge, you help build a future of thriving landscapes, vibrant cultures and prosperous communities—a legacy that future generations can inherit with pride.

Stand with the rangers. Back Uganda's talent. Together, we can.

WILDLIFE RANGER CHALLENGE





















Appreciation

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