



## **Tanzania Herds & Birds, Nature & Culture**

A safari with Walt Anderson & Augustine Mwangotya

Jan. 24-Feb. 5, 2018

**Timing is everything.** The vast herds of wildebeest, zebra, and gazelle that constitute *the Great Migration* of the Serengeti ecosystem arrive in the southern Serengeti shortly after the short rains green up the plains. They give birth at the time that the nutrient-rich plants are at their most beneficial (once the plains dry out, the herds have to move on). By synchronizing their births, they can “swamp” or saturate the predators so that the majority of the young get past their most vulnerable infancy. The resident predators (lions, hyenas, cheetahs) breed at this time too, as their food supply is at its peak. So do the dung beetles, as the vast herds provide abundant defecatory delicacies, and these, in turn, support beetle-hungry mongooses, foxes, hornbills, and much more. Then there are the “snow birds” from Europe and Asia—thousands of raptors, storks, shorebirds, and songbirds that converge on the East African grasslands, marshes, and woodlands to join the already abundant resident birds. Flowers and insects also thrive on the bounty that nature fairly predictably provides.

**Since timing is everything,** we, too, **need to be there.** This is where and when the action is. If an African safari could be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for you, then make it the best! And do it with expert leadership, people who know the patterns and behaviors of wildlife—who not only can find and spot the wildlife but who also can provide the rich details of *context* that makes this more than merely accumulating lists.

In northern Tanzania, **cultural diversity** is as dramatically high as is biodiversity. Sure, the Maasai now have cell phones, but in most ways, the lives of Maasai and especially the Hadzabe (who do *not* have modern technology) are much as they have been for centuries. Will this last? **Time will tell,** but for now, the time is right to experience a taste of these cultures responsibly while they are there.



### *Safari begins!*

January 24, Wednesday: **Arusha, Tanzania.**

**Karibu!** A representative from Aardvark Safaris will meet and greet you as soon as you arrive at Kilimanjaro International Airport and take you to **Mount Meru Hotel**, a 4-star hotel in gardens that attract the colorful birds that East Africa is famous for. Arusha, nestled in the shadow of majestic Mount Meru, is a dynamic, fast-growing town and a famed embarkation point for Tanzania safaris. Because of its altitude (roughly 4,600 feet above sea level), Arusha is blessed with a pleasant climate, perfect for the coffee plantations that surround it. The region is also home to proud Maasai and Meru people, who have lived in the area long past remembrance.

**Note:** Your pre-safari adventure is left up to you so that you can take advantage of your own flight arrangements (some may have frequent flyer miles to use) and possible interests in stopping in Europe or some other desirable locale. Some previous safari-goers have opted to arrive early and climb Mt. Kilimanjaro or simply have an extra night in order to be well-rested when the safari activities begin. If this interests you, you can make your own arrangements or ask Aardvark Safaris Tanzania for assistance.

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Jan. 24-Feb. 6, 2018

Jan. 25: **Arusha National Park.** Arusha is ideally located at the transition from the savannahs to the forested uplands on the slopes of Mt. Meru, a close neighbor of the giant Mt. Kilimanjaro. After breakfast and our initial orientation, we will take the short drive to Arusha National Park. We will drive through elegant, sometimes moody with mist, montane forest, watching carefully for baboons and monkeys (including the spectacular Black-&-White Colobus), various forest antelopes, African buffalo, and dozens of species of birds. We will walk to the rim of the Ngurdoto Crater, more accurately a caldera or volcanic collapse feature. We will scan the caldera floor for wildlife and watch the skies for birds of prey or other aerial masters. From the rim forest, we will proceed through woodlands and past lakes and marshes, watching for giraffes, waterbucks, kingfishers, and much more. On former lava (volcanic mudflow) deposits are the Momela Lakes, alkaline havens for multitudes of waterbirds, including flamingos, ducks and geese, shorebirds, storks, and ibises. We may have an option to go out onto one of these lakes in canoes to experience this landscape and its wildlife from an unusual perspective. Many visitors to Tanzania head directly to the savannah parks and miss the lush, green beauty and special wildlife of this park, a naturalist's favorite. In the evening, we'll return to **Mount Meru Hotel** for a delightful dinner and for a short briefing on details for the next day.

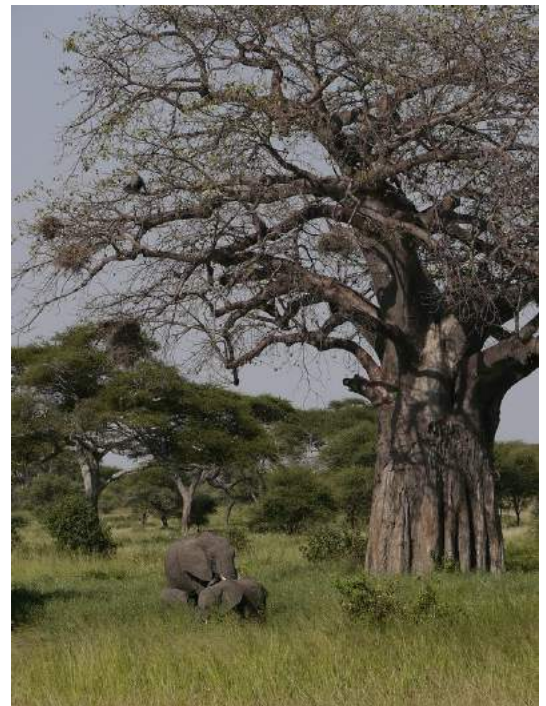
Jan. 26-27: **Tarangire National Park.** South of Arusha is Tarangire National Park. Augustine, our co-leader, did his Master's Degree through Prescott College studying community-based conservation in two villages on a wildlife corridor between two national parks. Tarangire park in the dry season is second only to Ngorongoro Crater in its concentrations of large wildlife. Its permanent water sources attract thousands of elephant, giraffe, wildebeest, zebra, gazelle, buffalo, eland, impala, hartebeest, oryx, and warthog, as well as uncommon species such as gerenuk and two species of kudu. These, in turn, attract the predators: lion, leopard, cheetah, and hyena. There are also the small critters (e.g., mongooses, hyraxes, squirrels) and incredible birds. The diverse landscape has open plains, stands of magnificent baobab trees, riverine forest, acacia parkland, scrub-woodlands, and wetlands. Overnights at the lovely **Simba Tented Camp** near Lake Burunge, which sometimes has thousands of flamingos. As is always the case, we will have "friendly" birds and mammals, habituated to human presence, at our camps and lodges.

Jan. 28: We will drive today to **Lake Eyasi**, a large, shallow soda lake at the base of a dramatic Rift Valley escarpment plunging about 3000 feet. While wildlife may be seen, our main objective here is to learn about ancient cultures that have occupied the area for thousands of years. Our lodge is a beautiful oasis, offering warm hospitality, a swimming pool, and one of the best sunset/sundowner spots in Tanzania. **Lake Eyasi Safari Lodge.**

Jan. 29. Early morning visit to a **Hadzabe** camp. The Hadza are true hunter-gatherers, and an early start will give us the best chances to follow them in their daily rhythms, to interact with and learn a bit about their hunting and gathering traditions. This is not a canned tourist experience; they will do whatever they wish, and we will be grateful for whatever we can experience. We will pack a picnic lunch for maximum flexibility. Currently, there are only a few hundred of these unique people left. Wikipedia has some interesting background you should read: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadza\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadza_people).



Blue Monkey



Elephants & Baobab



*Photos by Walt Anderson*

If time permits, we will visit a **Datoga** settlement. The Datoga, originally pastoralists similar in many traditions to the Maasai, migrated into this area about 300 years ago, no doubt displacing some of the Mbulu or Iraqw people who arrived a few thousand years ago. Most of the Datoga today are farmers specializing in onion plantations, and some are superb metal smiths who make the arrows for the Hadza. Overnight: **Ngorongoro Farm House**, whose lovely gardens provide scrumptious produce for this oasis and for some of the remote tented camps.

Jan. 30-31, Feb. 1: **Serengeti National Park**. We'll have three full days in the fabled Serengeti, one of the most productive and important wildlife areas in the world. With its vast rolling plains, dramatic outcrops of Precambrian rocks (kopjes), flat-topped acacias, crocodile- and hippo-inhabited rivers lined with riverine gallery forests, and huge herds of animals, the Serengeti is about the ultimate in "wild Africa." The famous "Great Migration" of wildebeest, zebra, and other grazing herbivores is one of the last mass movements of animals still taking place on earth, a globally significant phenomenon.

We have timed this itinerary to coincide with the birthing period for the migratory wildebeest and zebras. The former synchronize their births such that almost all the calves are born within a two-week window—a way to saturate the local predators and thereby reduce overall predation on the vulnerable young. Lion, leopard, cheetah, and other carnivore populations respond to this seasonal bounty with their own breeding activities.

Birding here is really special; for example, there are more than 50 species of diurnal birds of prey in this ecosystem, ranging from tiny Pygmy Falcons to tall and stately Secretary Birds. You will be astonished not only with the diversity of birds you will see but also by how easy it is to see them. Many—like the sunbirds, bee-eaters, rollers, hoopoes, starlings, kingfishers, barbets, bishops, and cordon bleus—are stunningly beautiful. We are not simply trying to amass high species lists but also to take time to observe behavior and to soak in the beauty of the avian diversity. Patience can also yield wonderful photographic rewards. There is a lot of history here—both human and animal—and you will be enriched and informed by Walt and Augustine so that you can get the big picture to complement the fascinating details that you will witness directly. Overnight: **Ndutu Kati Kati** or **Serengeti Kati Kati Tented Camp**, surrounded by the exotic sounds of wild Africa (truly an in-tents experience).

Feb. 2. After our final breakfast in the Serengeti, we'll drive east across the plains, ascending again into the highlands of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, a World Heritage Site dedicated to the peaceful union of pastoralism, conservation of natural resources, and responsible tourism. We will stop to visit Oldupai (or Olduvai) Gorge, world-renowned for the discoveries of early hominids made by archaeologists Mary and Louis Leakey. We will visit the small museum here and explore the gorge where the discoveries were made. For many people, a visit to Oldupai is a pilgrimage to one of the world's greatest archeological sites, a place where we can vicariously connect with our distant ancestors. We may also visit a Maasai Village. Overnight at **Ngorongoro Sopa Lodge**.

Feb. 3-4. **Ngorongoro Crater**. Brace yourself for a trip back into the Pleistocene! We will spend two days exploring one of the world's largest calderas, 10-11 miles in diameter and 2500 feet deep. This diverse ecosystem of forests, swamps, grasslands, and lakes supports lion, cheetah, serval, hyena, several kinds of jackal, zebra, rhino, hippo, elephant, and thousands of antelopes. Because poaching is not a problem here, rare black rhinos and elephants with enormous tusks are Feb. 3:

Feb. 5. **Ngorongoro Conservation Area**. Early morning drive through open highlands where Maasai live in this multi-use conservation area. Eventually we will reach the beautiful Empakaai Crater, where we will be able to descend on foot to this jewel-like lake on a rare, special opportunity to walk relatively safely in wild Africa (we will have a guard and will certainly watch out for buffalos). We will take our time (the rim is at around 10,000 feet), observing birds, flowers, butterflies, and whatever else we can find. Thereafter, we will drive out of the park to relax at the **Ngorongoro Farm House**. Tonight we will share highlights of the safari as we prepare tomorrow to depart from Arusha.

Feb. 6: **Arusha**. Today we return to Arusha for lunch and for afternoon shopping or rest, with day rooms at **Mount Meru Hotel**. We may visit the St Lucia Hospice and Orphanage for victims of HIV/AIDS that was founded by Augustine's heroic wife, Winfrida. Evening transfer to the airport for our flights out of country and the beginning of hours of reflection on our amazing experiences.



Lion eyes



Maasai Giraffes

## Your Leaders:



**Walt Anderson** has been Professor of Environmental Studies at Prescott College in Arizona since 1991, where his teaching focuses on natural history, ecology, wildlife management, conservation, ecotourism, nature art & photography. His words, illustrations, and photographs have appeared in many media, both scientific and popular, with his most recent book being *Inland Island: The Sutter Buttes*. Walt is a “naturalist of old cast in modern times, the next generation of a proud and ancient lineage” (*David Cavagnaro*). His extensive experience and knowledge are shared with keen enthusiasm and humor. Walt’s first East African safari was in 1979, and over the years he has become a keen interpreter of this land and its diverse wildlife. He has led many safaris for organizations as diverse as the World Wildlife Fund, Connecticut Audubon, Focus on Nature, and Betchart Expeditions. He serves as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Biocultural Conservation Institute, a non-profit working in East Africa in ecotourism and community-based conservation. Walt is an expert in field identification of organisms; in teaching ecological concepts and natural history; in collaborating with foundations, NGO’s, and local groups; and in facilitating group dynamics.



**Augustine Mwangotya**, founder and owner of Aardvark Safaris, grew up at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro and studied at Tanzania’s College of Wildlife Management. He worked as a warden for the Tanzania Wildlife Department, gaining an invaluable network of contacts, and served as a driver-guide with major tour companies. Augustine was Walt’s Master’s student at Prescott College, with his excellent graduate thesis being on community-based conservation in villages that occur on a wildlife corridor between two national parks in Tanzania. Armed with both academic credentials and extensive field experience, Augustine was in a unique position to create Aardvark Safaris. He has led safaris for many people and organizations over the years, including National Geographic, Natural Habitat, Semester at Sea, Sea Born, Jane Goodall Institute, Prescott College, Sierra Club, Jack Hanna, and Willy Smith. Augustine’s warmth and humor, his intimate knowledge of animal behavior shared through captivating stories, his friendships with indigenous people, and his command of logistical details have given him a well-deserved reputation in the safari field.

**Be sure to fill out the reservation form and send in a deposit payable to Walt Anderson as soon as possible to reserve a space, as I am limiting enrollment to a maximum of 16. This is a very exciting itinerary, and it may well fill quickly, so save yourself a spot!**

**I look forward to traveling with you!**

Walt Anderson  
2911 E. Granite Gardens Drive  
Prescott AZ 86301-8457  
(928)445-7470  
[geolobo@cablone.net](mailto:geolobo@cablone.net)



## General Information

**Safari Cost:** \$8990 per person

**Single Supplement:** \$660 (if it is not possible to find you a room-mate)

A small-group surcharge will apply if we have six or fewer guests. Maximum number of guests on this special trip is 16.

### Air Travel:

Note that the main safari begins on January 24 and ends on February 6 in Arusha, Tanzania. We are leaving air arrangements up to you, though if we can provide reasonable assistance, please ask.

### The safari includes the following:

- Land transportation in Tanzania. 4-wheel-drive vehicles, and experienced driver-guides. Vehicles are equipped with radios for communication, first aid kits, and cool boxes for beverages (mineral water provided on game drives).
- Accommodations and meals in excellent lodges, camps, or hotels as indicated in the itinerary.
- Instruction and leadership by Walt Anderson and Augustine Mwangotya. Pre-departure information on all aspects of the safari, including reading suggestions on the history, culture, and ecology of East Africa.
- Miscellaneous fees and tips, such as park entrance fees, government taxes and levies, normal portorage and meal tips, hotel taxes, service charges.
- Membership in the Flying Doctor Society in the unlikely event that emergency transportation to a hospital facility is required. Transportation only; hospital costs will be borne by the participant.

### The safari does not include the following:

International airfare or airport taxes, passport and visa fees, excess baggage charges, personal and baggage insurance, personal items (e.g., room service, laundry, medicines, phone or e-mail bills), beverages (except coffee/tea at meals and mineral water on game drives), photographic expenses, optional activities/excursions, some meals in Arusha. Tips to driver-guides are an important show of appreciation; guidelines will be provided.

### Fitness and Health:

Anyone in reasonably good health should do well on safari, as activities are generally not strenuous. You will be staying in first-class accommodations and eating excellent food, though the possibility of traveler's diarrhea exists because of changes in mineral content of water. Even though Flying Doctor Society membership offers emergency transport, be aware that you will sometimes be in remote areas where immediate health services are not readily available. Flying Doctor service only includes transport; hospital costs would be your responsibility. Long international flights and long stretches of travel on rough (possibly dusty or muddy) country roads can be very tiring, and we will spend some lengthy days in the field. We will arrange opportunities for some walking to counteract the effects of long game drives; these also provide rare and wonderful opportunities for stronger connections with the wildlife and people of Africa. Upon registration, you will be sent a medical health form to fill out in order to participate, and you will need to sign the typical liability release. You must be covered by medical insurance that is valid overseas, and we encourage you to take out medical and trip cancellation/interruption insurance.



### \*Travel Protection:

As a travel agent, Walt has access to an **excellent travel insurance plan offered through [Berkshire Hathaway](#)**.

The program is really cutting-edge in responsiveness with access to the company through a smart phone app, Facebook, Twitter, email, Webchat, phone call or even text. Customers can get service for many claims by simply taking photos of documents, receipts and boarding passes and remitting them electronically. You can get real assistance (including money with the assistance services) incredibly quickly (they can deposit money directly to your designated account). There are **several options:**

**ExactCare** is comprehensive, customizable, and affordable based on a fraction of the trip cost. It can even cover **pre-existing conditions** if it is applied for **within 15 days of making the trip deposit** (certain guidelines apply)! Well worth being proactive. **ExactCare can help reimburse you for losses** with respect to trip cancellation, trip interruption, trip delay, missed connection, lost baggage/baggage delay, medical expense benefit (including dental), medical evacuation, and more. Options include **ExactCare Value & Extra**.

**AirCare** is an alternative if you only want benefits directly related to flights (no medical). For a very modest fee, you can get paid for a delayed flight, missed connection, delayed bag, lost bag, or tarmac delay.

If you have **ExactCare**, you do not need **AirCare** too. Please contact [Berkshire Hathaway](#) for specifics on your program based on our group trip cost and residency state.

You may certainly travel without travel insurance, but personally, I have found that the unexpected is not at all impossible, and I always get it when I travel. I just think this is one of the best options available.

## Reservation Form

# Tanzania Herds & Birds, Nature & Culture

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ space(s) on the Tanzania Herds & Birds, Nature & Culture Safari from January 24—February 6, 2018.

Price: \$8990 per person

Deposit: \$3000 per person \_\_\_\_\_

*Single supplement (\$ 660) is possible and would be payable with final payment.*

I (We) have enclosed or arranged (see below) a deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per person, for a total deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Balance due: \_\_\_\_\_ Payable by October 1, 2017.

Deposits refundable in full until August 1, 2017. Thereafter, refunds based on ability to recover deposits in Tanzania.

No refunds after Oct. 1, 2017 (trip cancellation insurance advised; see below\*).

**A personal check, cashier's check, money order, or even a bank-to-bank transfer should be possible.** My Chase banker told me about Chase Quick Pay. If I have your name and email, Chase can email you a request for funds, which you can then transfer to my account securely (and free). If you choose to *wire* funds, there will be some charges. If you send a check, make it payable to **Walt Anderson**. Talk to your banker and let me know if you need any more information.

Please mail or email **Reservation Form** to Walt Anderson, 2911 E. Granite Gardens Drive, Prescott AZ 86301-8457, [geolobo@cableone.net](mailto:geolobo@cableone.net). Send **deposit** by mail or through bank transfer, as suggested above. If you have questions, call Walt at **928-445-7470** or email at [geolobo@cableone.net](mailto:geolobo@cableone.net).

Names of persons traveling \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers. Day: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_; Evening: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_; Cell: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (most information will be sent by e-mail, if possible): \_\_\_\_\_

Ø \_\_\_\_\_ I am traveling with \_\_\_\_\_

Ø \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to room alone and am willing to pay the single supplement charge (\$660). (Single rooms subject to availability)

Ø \_\_\_\_\_ I am traveling alone and would like to share a room. Please assign a room-mate. I understand that if none is available, I will be charged the single supplement.

**You will receive a *liability release form* (required for safari participation) after signing up.**

### **\*Travel Protection:**

As a travel agent, Walt has access to an **excellent travel insurance plan offered through [Berkshire Hathaway](#).**

Use the live link or go to [www.bhtp.com](http://www.bhtp.com) and mention Walt Anderson, Code AA0568.