



Ronan Donovan

UGANDA

WITH

STEVEN PINKER AND

RICHARD WRANGHAM



Ronan Donovan

January 2014

Unique and Exclusive

A once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the wildlife and culture of Uganda, while exploring human evolution in its birthplace, with two of the most exciting and innovative evolutionary thinkers of our times



AFRICAN GENESIS

APES, HUMANS AND THE MEANING OF LIFE



In January 2014 Steven Pinker and Richard Wrangham will lead a small exclusive expedition to Uganda in search of the natural history behind human evolution. As participants explore forests, savannas and marshes, see big game and big landscapes, and find thriving wild apes in the western Rift Valley, they will have the opportunity to discuss the latest discoveries about what makes us human. 'African Genesis' will be a one-time tour of nothing less than the past, present and future of our species in the company of two pioneers of contemporary evolutionary thinking.

Co-leaders will be novelist and philosopher Rebecca Goldstein and Ugandan-charity-worker Elizabeth Ross. Twenty-five years of working in Uganda give Ross and Wrangham an intimate knowledge of the country, its wildlife and people. By contrast the special insights brought by Pinker and Goldstein will come from their being first-time visitors to a region that has unparalleled significance for the human story.

To ensure the exceptional quality of this one-time experience, we will accept only eight companions.

DATES: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 - Wednesday January 22nd 2014

COST: \$25,000 per person all inclusive of tips and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. THIS PRICE INCLUDES A \$10,000 TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO **THE KIBALE CHIMPANZEE PROJECT** – since 1987 one of the world's premier great ape research sites.

INTERESTED? CONTACT: Elizabeth Ross elizabethaross@me.com

GUEST STUDY LEADERS

Richard Wrangham is a behavioral ecologist and the Ruth B. Moore Professor of Biological Anthropology in the Department of Human Evolutionary Biology at Harvard University. In the 1970s he worked with Jane Goodall studying chimpanzee behavior in Gombe National Park (Tanzania). In 1987 he launched a parallel study in Uganda, the ***Kibale Chimpanzee Project***. Wrangham's book *Demonic Males: Apes, and the Origins of Human Violence* (1996) examined the relationship between lethal violence among chimpanzees and aggressive behavior in humans. More recently (2009), in *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, Wrangham has proposed that the invention of cooking was a driving force in the evolution of the human species. Wrangham is a Patron of GRASP (UNEP) working for the conservation of apes in the wild.



Steven Pinker is a cognitive psychologist and the Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard University. Pinker is a leading figure in psychology recognized for his writings on mind, brain, genes evolution and human nature. He became widely known for his book [*The Language Instinct*](#) (1994), which was followed by [*How the Mind Works*](#) (1997), [*Words and Rules*](#) (2000), [*The Blank Slate*](#) (2002), and [*The Stuff of Thought*](#) (2007). In 2011 Pinker took a new direction with [*The Better Angels of Our Nature*](#), in which he showed that human violence has been declining over historical time and explored the reasons why. Among the publications that have named Steven Pinker as a top global thinker have been *Time* magazine (2004), *Prospect* (2005) and *Foreign Policy* (2008, 2010, 2011).



Rebecca Newberger Goldstein is a novelist, philosopher and MacArthur Fellow who likes to combine fictional narrative with provocative intellectual debates. She first became known (according to the *New York Times*) for her “audaciously brainy debut novel, *The Mind-Body Problem*” (1983). Since then she has published five novels, most recently *36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction* (2010) and two biographies (*Incompleteness: The Proof and Paradox of Kurt Gödel* (2005) and *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity*, (2006). In 2011 she was named Humanist of the Year, and delivered the Tanner Lectures on Human Values at Yale University. Her next book is called *Plato at the Googplex: Why Philosophy Won't Go Away*.



Elizabeth Ross is the Executive Director of the ***Kasiisi Project***, which she founded in 1997 as the community arm of the ***Kibale Chimpanzee Project***, to share its message of conservation with the local people. The project works to improve education and increase conservation awareness in 14 government primary schools bordering Kibale National Park. With 16 years of designing, implementing and evaluating educational, health and conservation programs in Uganda, Dr. Ross will bring to the trip a wealth of experience of the challenges facing both local communities living close to protected areas and the NGOs that work with them.

PRE-TRIP: Tuesday, January 7th, 2014

Depart the USA (or other gateways) on an overnight flight to Entebbe, Uganda.

1

DAY 1: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014

ENTEBBE / KARIBU GUEST HOUSE

Pick up from Airport, Introductory Presentations, Relaxing, Bird Watching



2

DAY 2-4: Thursday – Saturday January 9th – 11th 2014

MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK / NILE SAFARI LODGE

Air Transfer, Trips on the Nile to Murchison Falls and Lake Albert, Game drives,



DAY 5-7: Sunday-Tuesday, January 12th to 14th, 2014

KIBALE NATIONAL PARK / NDALI LODGE

Air Transfer Chimpanzee Tracking, Kibale Chimpanzee Project Research Camp, Kasiisi Project Programs



Kasiisi Project Students with One Laptop Per Child computers and building and testing Fuel-efficient stoves.

4

DAY 8-9: Wednesday – Thursday, January 15th to 16th, 2014

QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK / KYAMBURA GORGE SAFARI LODGE

Elephant, Hippos, Lion, Leopard, Kyambura Gorge Chimpanzees



5

DAY 10: Thursday, January 17th, 2014

SOUTHERN QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK / ISHASHA WILDERNESS CAMP
Tree Climbing Lions, Elephant,



6 **DAY 11- 12:** Friday-Saturday, January 18th to 19th, 2014
BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK / BUHOMA LODGE
Gorilla Trekking



DAY 13-14: Sunday-Tuesday, January 19th-21st, 2014

LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK / MIHINGO LODGE

This is surely one of the most beautiful places to stay in Uganda.
Walk with Eland, Zebra and Hyena



1

DAY 15: Tuesday, January 21st, 2014

ENTEBBE / Dinner and Day Room/Overnight *KARIBU GUEST HOUSE*

Flight back to the US or overnight in Entebbe

Detailed Itinerary

1

DAY 1: Wednesday, January 8th, 2014 **ENTEBBE / KARIBU GUEST HOUSE**

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met and transferred to the beautiful Karibu Guest House just 10 minutes drive from Entebbe International Airport. This boutique hotel, set on a leafy hillside overlooking Lake Victoria, and exclusively booked for our group provides a tranquil retreat from the hustle and bustle of Entebbe. If you arrive in the morning you will have the remainder of the day to relax and enjoy the lovely landscaped gardens with over 30 species of indigenous birds or play a game of Pétanque with a cold drink from the bar. Alternatively trips to the Entebbe Botanical Gardens or the Uganda Wildlife Education Center can be arranged. In the evening, you will meet Richard Wrangham and Steven Pinker, their wives, and fellow travelers for welcome drinks at the bar. This will be followed by a 5-course Mediterranean dinner, made from fresh ingredients purchased daily in local Ugandan markets.

2

DAY 2-4: Thursday – Saturday January 9th – 11th 2014 **MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK / NILE SAFARI LODGE**

Following breakfast, you will fly to Murchison Falls National Park where you will be staying at the Nile Safari Lodge. The lodge is nestled in a papyrus swamp on the southern bank of the mighty Nile River and consists of luxury cabins and tents, equipped with en-suite bathrooms and private balconies overlooking the banks of the river. You can enjoy an afternoon drink or an early morning coffee/tea on your balcony served by a private waiter all while watching hippos relax in the water and lazy crocodiles sun themselves on the banks.

From the lodge, you will take game drives through the park to see wildlife including elephants, giraffe, buffalo, warthogs, leopards, and lions. There are also over 450 species of bird in the park and the lodge has a resident expert to help you identify any that you might see or hear. You will cruise along the river to see the spectacular Murchison Falls where the Nile River gets squeezed through a 10-meter wide gorge before falling 40 meters. The falls was named after Roderick Murchison, the famed president of the Royal Geographical Society, who supported the exploration and mapping of much of East Africa.

We will also take a boat trip in the other direction to Lake Albert to visit some of the papyrus swamps. These swamps will inspire us to reflect on the Aquatic Ape theory of human evolution. While the Aquatic Ape itself is an outdated concept, the idea that aquatic habitats have been critical habitats for humans and our ancestors is very much alive.

Other amenities and activities at the lodge include a swimming pool, a fire pit, an open air bar/lounge and walking trails which are especially good for bird-watching.

3

DAY 5-7: Sunday-Tuesday, January 12th to 14th, 2014 **KIBALE NATIONAL PARK / NDALI LODGE**

After breakfast, you will fly in to southern Uganda to visit Kibale National Park. You will be staying at Ndali Lodge, one of the most charming guesthouses in Uganda. At Ndali, the private bandas are equipped with en suite bathrooms and a private verandah overlooking the Rwenzori Mountains, also known as the *Mountains of the Moon*.

The lodge, located in the Bunyaruguru crater-lake region, is situated on the rim of an extinct volcano, which is now the stunning Lake Nyinambuga. It is built on the Ndali estate, one of the first private farms to start cultivating tea in Uganda in the 1920s. The rich and fertile volcanic soil is still farmed today in the traditional style and you can visit a vanilla farm to observe some of the local agricultural practices. The lodge retains the feeling of a bygone era and guests will dine by candlelight in the open-air dining room and can walk through gardens or even swim in the swimming pool.

Your visit to this area will include trips to the nearby Kibale National Park, where you will track wild chimpanzees through a high altitude equatorial rainforest. Following our noisy cousins, you will have the chance to observe their social behavior and how similar chimpanzees and humans really are. Kibale is home to 12 other species of primate as well as other forest dwelling animals such as duiker, bush pig, and hornbills. You will also visit the Makerere University Biological Field Station, home to a number of researchers studying the flora and fauna of the area. Richard Wrangham started the Kibale Chimpanzee Project here in 1987 and you will have a chance to meet and chat with people studying the chimps.

Finally, Elizabeth Ross will take to you visit the Kasiisi Project a community organization that she started, dedicated to helping improve schools bordering the park and to encouraging young people to help protect Kibale Forest and its chimpanzees. You will have the opportunity to get to visit a local school, talk to children and teachers and learn more about what life is like in rural Uganda and the impact of small NGOs.

4 DAY 8-9: Wednesday – Thursday, January 15th to 16th, 2014

QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK / KYAMBURA GORGE SAFARI LODGE

Your first stop in Queen Elizabeth National Park will be Kyambura Gorge, the western arm of the African Rift Valley. The Great Rift Valley started to form over 30 million years ago when the African and Arabian continental plates started to pull apart. The subsequent change in climate and habitat is thought to have sparked our early ancestors to leave the refuge of the rainforest and wander into the savannah.

From Kibale, you will be driven via the equator to the Kyambura Gorge Safari Lodge, a luxury lodge situated above the gorge, consisting of private bandas or cabins each equipped with an en suite bathroom and a private balcony with views of the gorge, the rift valley savannah and the Rwenzori Mountains. There is also a common lounge/bar area and salt-water swimming pool.

Kyambura Gorge carries rainforest deep into pure savanna. Here chimpanzees cross open habitats in search of figs, but lions are a danger. The Gorge inspires us by conjuring up a view of where the common ancestor of chimpanzees and humans evolved into the first hominins.

Queen Elizabeth National Park was founded in 1954 after Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Uganda. It is the most visited national park in Uganda and home to dozens of mammal species and over 500 species of bird. You will spend Wednesday evening relaxing at the lodge and on Thursday morning, you will take a game drive through the Mweya sector of the park where you can see elephants, hippos, lions and leopards. In the afternoon, you will take a private cruise along the Kazinga Channel, a 32 km waterway that connects Lake Edward and Lake George. This is the home of the largest concentration of hippos and Nile crocodiles in the world and you will see numerous animals and birds cooling off along the water's edge.

5**DAY 10: Friday, January 17th, 2014****SOUTHERN QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK / ISHASHA WILDERNESS CAMP**

From the gorge, you will be transferred by Land Rover to the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth Park and will be staying at the Ishasha Wilderness Camp on the Ntungwe River. The Camp consists of luxury framed canvas rooms with en suite bathroom. There is a common lounge area/dining area where guests can dine *al fresco*.

On Friday afternoon, there will be a game drive through the Ishasha sector with the hope of seeing the incredible tree-climbing lions of Uganda. These lions can often be found lazily napping in fig trees after a big meal. Following the game drive, sundowner cocktails will be served at a viewing point near the Ntungwe River as the sun sets against the backdrop of the park. Here you can often see Elephant returning from a day's foraging in the Congo.

On Saturday morning, there will be another game drive through the park before heading to a local community. There you will learn about local farming practices, visit a traditional Ugandan homestead and meet a local medicinal herbalist.

6**DAY 11- 12: Saturday-Sunday, January 18th to 19th, 2014****BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK / BUHOMA LODGE**

On Saturday afternoon, you will be driven to the Buhoma Lodge in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, the home of the largest and rarest of the great apes, the Mountain Gorilla. At Bwindi, you will be staying at the Buhoma Lodge, which in private cottages with en suite bathrooms and balconies with views of the forest canopy. The main building of the lodge with wrap around verandah has a comfortable dining area and lounge with a fireplace to warm you up during chilly nights. It has been said that if you only stay at one lodge in Uganda this is the one to choose!

On Saturday morning, you will wake early to begin your trek up the slopes of the park to visit with one of the groups of habituated Mountain Gorillas. Bwindi is home to approximately 350 of these animals, just about half of the world's population. Many people have described seeing these majestic animals as a spiritual experience and it is truly a rare privilege to spend time observing them play, eat and even nap. Although the park is known for gorillas, the extreme variation in altitude make it one of the most bio diverse parks in East Africa and it contains over 120 mammal species and more than 50% of the tree species endemic to Uganda.

7**DAY 13-14: Monday-Tuesday, January 19th-21st, 2014****LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK / MIHINGO LODGE**

On Monday morning, you will drive to Lake Mburo National Park where you will be staying at Mihingo Lodge, surely one of the most beautiful lodges in Uganda. Each of the private rooms is equipped with en suite bathrooms and a private balcony overlooking a watering hole. The common area of the lodge includes an open-air lounge, dining room, and swimming pool all overlooking the park.

On Monday afternoon, you will enjoy a game drive through this park, which is the home to numerous zebras, eland and impala which are not found in any of the other parks in Uganda. There are also large numbers of waterbuck, warthog, topi, bushbuck, waterbuck, buffalo and klipspringers. The following day, you will take a guided half-day nature walk through the park where you can do some bird watching and learn about the local flora. On Tuesday afternoon, you can take a relaxing cruise on Lake Mburo to see the wetlands and swamps that are home to numerous aquatic birds and the elusive sitatunga, or just relax by the pool, watching animals at the water hole below. Other activities and amenities at the lodge include night game drives, horseback safaris, and bushbaby viewing from the lodge lounge.

1 DAY 15: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014
ENTEBBE/ KARIBU GUESTHOUSE AND HOME

On Wednesday morning, you will drive back to Entebbe and return to the Karibu Guest House, stopping at the equator for some souvenir shopping. Day rooms and dinner will be booked for those of you returning home that night.

Those of you flying out the next morning will stay at the Karibu overnight.

You may also enjoy an optional day or overnight trip to the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary which we can arrange for those interested. Take a boat across Lake Victoria to the island that is home to over 40 chimpanzees that have been orphaned due to poaching or the pet trade. This amazing island is forested and the chimpanzees are released every morning and allowed to range freely to the sanctuary for regular feedings. From a viewing platform, you will get to see the chimpanzees get fed and also meet and chat with the keepers of the animals who will discuss the conservation challenges facing these animals in Uganda. If you stay overnight you can take a walk with the young chimps in the morning.

