

Slow Italian, Fast Learning

Ep.403: A good year for wildlife conservation

Italian	English
Da bracconieri diventati ambientalisti ad agricoltori che si adattano per aiutare la fauna selvatica locale, questo 2025 è stato un anno un po' più roseo almeno per una parte del regno animale. In Uganda, il numero dei gorilla di montagna – che sono sempre a rischio estinzione – è in aumento, grazie ai fondi provenienti dal turismo che finanziano importanti iniziative di conservazione. I visitatori stranieri pagano circa 1200 dollari australiani per un permesso che consente loro di osservare questi animali nel loro habitat naturale, finanziando così le comunità locali e incentivando la protezione di queste specie. Con una parte delle tasse raccolte che torna alle comunità, gli ex bracconieri ora lavorano a fianco degli ambientalisti per impedire ad altri di tendere trappole. Philemon Mujuni, un ex bracconiere pentito, ha affermato che molti ex bracconieri hanno cambiato rotta. "The gorillas have increased because there is no more going to the forest to hunt, there are no more traps and even Uganda Wildlife Authority have employed very many rangers and those people like we reformed poachers, we protect where our village is so that no one can enter and kill those gorillas." Da una situazione di estinzione nel secolo scorso ad oggi, con una popolazione che supera i 1.000 esemplari, le prospettive per i gorilla di montagna sembrano promettenti.	From poachers turned conservationists to farmers adapting to help local wildlife, this 2025 has been a little bit brighter year for at least some of the animal kingdom. In Uganda, the number of endangered mountain gorillas is on the rise, with tourism funding crucial conservation efforts. Foreign visitors pay around \$1200 AUD for a permit to see them in their natural habitat, funding local communities and incentivising the protection of these animals. With a portion of the fees collected going back into communities, former poachers now work alongside conservationists to stop others from setting traps. Philemon Mujuni, a reformed poacher, says many former poachers have changed course. "The gorillas have increased because there is no more going to the forest to hunt, there are no more traps and even Uganda Wildlife Authority have employed very many rangers and those people like we reformed poachers, we protect where our village is so that no one can enter and kill those gorillas." From facing extinction in the last century to now seeing population numbers exceed 1,000, the outlook for mountain gorillas looks promising.

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In Kenya è in corso la lotta per proteggere i rinoceronti dal bracconaggio e dal declino genetico. Negli anni '70, decine di migliaia di esemplari sono stati uccisi per le loro corna, decimando la popolazione. Ma una nuova era di salvaguardia sta lentamente ma costantemente cambiando la situazione. I ranger della Lewa Wildlife Conservancy e del Kenya Wildlife Service incidono con cura le orecchie dei rinoceronti con piccoli tagli dalla forma unica per aiutare gli ambientalisti a tracciare e monitorare i singoli animali. Ogni forma e incisione unica sull'orecchio costituisce una sorta di codice digitale che aiuta gli ambientalisti a tracciare e monitorare il singolo animale. Nel 2025 sono state effettuate incisioni su 46 rinoceronti. Per Phillip Muruthi, vicepresidente della Africa Wildlife Foundation, questo serve a prevenire la consanguineità tra gli animali. "The smaller the population of a species that you are managing, you will do what we call biological management. So you do not want mother and son breeding for example because you may have genetic implications and so one of the advantages of notching and individual identification is simply to manage the population and allow them to grow faster without causing any genetic bottlenecks." In Zimbabwe, dove vivono circa 100.000 elefanti, i conflitti con gli abitanti dei villaggi sono aumentati a causa dei cambiamenti	In Kenya, the fight to protect rhinos from poaching and genetic decline is underway. In the 1970's, tens of thousands were killed for their horns, decimating the population. But a new era of protection is slowly but determinedly changing the story. Rangers from the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and the Kenya Wildlife Service carefully notch the rhinos' ears with small, uniquely shaped cuts to help conservationists track and monitor individual animals. Each unique shape and notch on the ear forms a kind of fingerprint code, which helps conservationists track and monitor the individual animal. In 2025, 46 rhinos have been notched. Phillip Muruthi, Vice president of Africa Wildlife Foundation says this is to prevent the animals from inbreeding. "The smaller the population of a species that you are managing, you will do what we call biological management. So you do not want mother and son breeding for example because you may have genetic implications and so one of the advantages of notching and individual identification is simply to manage the population and allow them to grow faster without causing any genetic bottlenecks." In Zimbabwe, home to around 100,000 elephants, conflict with villagers has been
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climatici che hanno aggravato la competizione per il cibo e l'acqua. Per generazioni, la popolazione ha cercato di allontanare gli animali selvatici battendo pentole e padelle. Ora, un nuovo approccio consiste nel dotare alcuni elefanti di collari GPS e monitorarne i movimenti. Il consigliere locale e agricoltore Senzeni Sibanda ha affermato che il nuovo metodo consente di avvertire la popolazione in anticipo. SHONA THEN ENGLISH: "We have strategies that we use to ward off elephants when they come close, because they know the sound of gunfire, if you do this, they run away (claps). Secondly, we use empty water bottles, we still bang pans, but now, we get warnings in time and rangers react more quickly."	growing as climate change worsens competition for food and water. For generations, people have banged pots and pans to try to drive the wildlife away. Now, a new approach is fitting some elephants with GPS collars and tracking their movements. Local councillor and farmer Senzeni Sibanda says the new method means people are warned ahead of time. SHONA THEN ENGLISH: "We have strategies that we use to ward off elephants when they come close, because they know the sound of gunfire, if you do this, they run away (claps). Secondly, we use empty water bottles, we still bang pans, but now, we get warnings in time and rangers react more quickly."
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Report by Sydney Lang for SBS News.

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