

# THE TWGA TIMES

PRESERVATION, CONSERVATION, AND EDUCATION



*Kefas and Go To Kili team celebrate a successful summit on Mount Kilimanjaro*

*“Adopt the pace of nature:  
her secret is patience”*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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- U.K. Renewable Energy Projects

Dear Giraffe Friends,

Welcome to our fourth year and the beginning of 2026. The new year has already begun with many exciting advances.

Over the past months, I’ve been on the road throughout the Midwest, sharing the story of giraffe conservation. These conversations have sparked greater awareness and brought a wonderful influx of new supporters into our growing circle.

We’re also expanding our digital outreach. In February, you’ll begin seeing more frequent YouTube updates, including new videos from Tanzania, where I’ll be meeting with our team at Tafakari. Being on the ground together allows us to strengthen our work and share it with you more directly and transparently.

One of the most exciting developments this year is

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our upcoming Safari to Save Giraffes. Kefas will be hosting a family safari, with proceeds directly supporting the work of the World Giraffe Alliance. If you've ever dreamed of going on safari, this is truly the moment. August and September are optimal for viewing wildlife, sleeping under African skies, and reconnecting deeply with the natural world. We are currently taking sign-ups, and more detailed information will be arriving in your inbox over the next four weeks.

At Tafakari, the caretaker cottage is now halfway completed, and over the next three months we'll begin planting and further land restoration. Every contribution you make goes directly into building Tafakari and supporting our Maasai partners. The opportunity to earn income allows them to access essentials they cannot grow themselves—clothing, medical care, and other necessities that are often paid for entirely out of pocket. Your support is not only helping to save giraffes, but also improving the lives of people with very limited options. Their gratitude is shared with me often, and I am honored to pass it along to you.

There will also be major developments ahead in how giraffe conservation is approached in the United States. New information is emerging, and it will require a strong and united call to action from all of us. I am deeply saddened to share that the world's only spotless giraffe died last year—she was just three years old. This is only one of several troubling stories we've encountered recently, and we'll be addressing these issues more fully in the upcoming newsletter.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out with questions or articles you'd like us to explore. We remain committed to keeping you fully informed about our progress in Tanzania and beyond. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your steadfast generosity and belief in this work.

Until April,  
Kupenda na amani,  
Michele and the TWGA Team

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## Kefas' Corner

Jambo giraffe friends,

This is Kefas, co-director of The World Giraffe Alliance sending you greetings from Tanzania. This corner of the newsletter is to give our readers updates and information about the culture and community here in Tanzania.

I am Maasai. Our property, Tafakari, is on Maasai land. Not everyone knows what is a Maasai. So let me share.

Maasai are a semi nomadic, pastoral people. We wandering in groups throughout the year, and eating almost entirely meat, blood and milk coming from our own cows.

We live a very strict way of life based on our beliefs. One thing which is very forbidden is eating wild meat and agricultural produce. We never kill the wild animals or destroy the vegetation. We do not plant crops. We do not use excessive water. This means we are the most conservation minded of people!

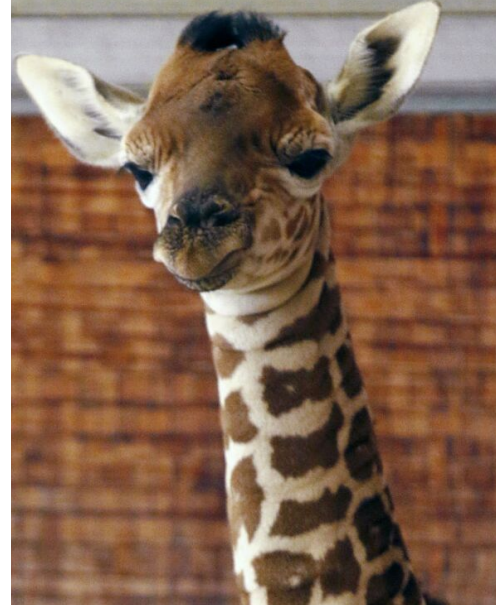
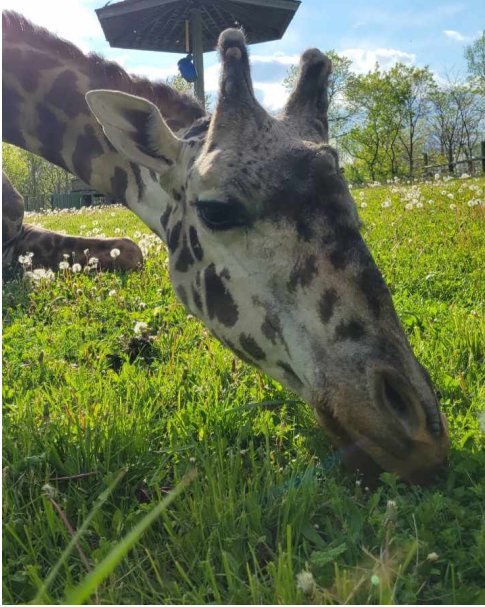
More to follow in our next edition.

Asante!



*Kefas holding his newborn baby Michel in 2023*

# Killed in Captivity



*From left to right: Kiko, Kipekee, and Kipenzi*

On the afternoon of Thursday, January 1, 2026, Kiko, a 13-year-old Masai giraffe at the Toronto Zoo, was killed in a tragic accident. While being given access to an additional behind-the-scenes area of his habitat, Kiko became caught in an opening door. Despite the immediate response of zoo staff, he panicked and sustained injuries that, due to the unique anatomy of giraffes, proved fatal (Toronto Zoo.)

In recent months, Kiko had also been receiving specialized care for a hoof and foot injury.

Earlier in 2025, Kipekee, a rare spotless giraffe believed to be the only one of her kind in human care, died suddenly at two years of age at Brights Zoo in Limestone, Tennessee, on November 26, 2025.

In July 2015, Kipenzi, a three-month-old baby giraffe at the Dallas Zoo, broke her neck and died after running into the perimeter edge of her enclosure.

These senseless deaths prompt the question: should giraffes be captive animals?

Zoos and animal habitats around the world often argue that keeping animals in captivity is a way to preserve and propagate endangered species. They claim that such environments protect animals from predators and poachers and are overall the best way to ensure their safety. However, there are facts that complicate this argument, especially for giraffes.

Giraffes in the wild can roam vast distances across savanna landscapes. Their size and natural behavior require large amounts of space and food to thrive. In contrast, zoos universally provide far smaller spaces: according to some reports, average zoo giraffe enclosures in North America are roughly 1.2 acres — a tiny fraction of the area a wild giraffe's home range might encompass.

Because captive giraffes cannot walk freely as they would in the wild, they are prone to physical and psychological stress, which can lead to health problems including lameness and trauma.

Studies and reports also show that giraffes are especially vulnerable to fatal accidents in captivity. Their long necks and ossicones can become entangled in enclosure wiring, doors, or other structures, leading to severe injury or death. Independent reviews of giraffe mortality in zoos have found that approximately 21 % to 25 % of giraffe deaths are due to trauma — often accidental, self-inflicted, or unspecified injuries

Statistics suggest that 25 % of baby giraffes in captivity die before age two — a rate significantly higher than expected in healthy wild populations (Earth.org.)

Perhaps it is time to rethink giraffe captivity. When a significant portion of deaths of a species are attributed to conditions created by captivity, we are not solely protecting that species — we are part of the problem.

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# A Three Part Look at Tanzania's Olduvai Gorge

Tanzania is home to some of the most iconic landscapes in Africa. From snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro to the sweeping plains of the Serengeti, from the island of Zanzibar to the shores of Lake Victoria, the country boasts extraordinary natural beauty and untamed wilderness.

Yet among all of Tanzania's treasures, the most historic and significant is the often—under-sung Olduvai Gorge.

Olduvai Gorge is uniquely renowned for providing the most continuous record of human evolution over the past two million years and is considered a central part of the “Cradle of Humankind.”

Located in the Great Rift Valley, this paleo-anthropological wonder is a keystone site in the story of human evolution. The local Maasai people called the area Oldupai, meaning “the place of the wild sisal,” a succulent plant introduced to the region in the 1800s.

A steep-sided ravine in the Great Rift Valley, Olduvai Gorge stretches roughly 30 miles long and plunges more than 300 feet deep. Situated on the Serengeti Plains, the site lies within the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and is just 28 miles from Laetoli, the location of the famous 3.6-million-year-old hominid footprints—the oldest ever recorded.



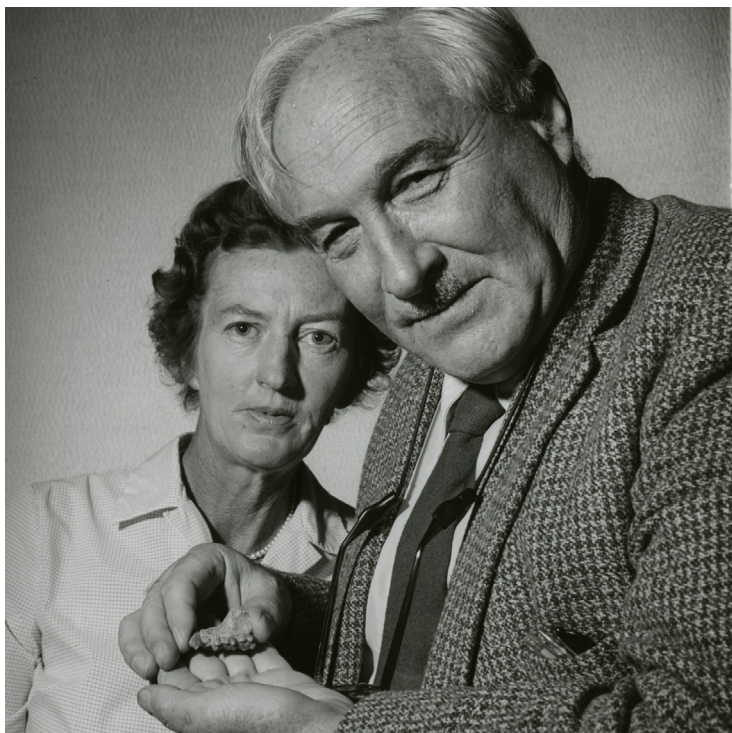
*Footprints Laetoli Site in 2016. (Photo: Fidelis T Masao and colleagues via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 4.0)*

Olduvai Gorge first came to the attention of Western researchers in 1911, when German physician and archaeologist Professor Wilhelm Kattwinkel stumbled upon the site. His investigations led to the discovery of fossil remains belonging to an extinct three-toed horse. In 1913, German geologist Hans Reck followed, unearthing a nearly complete, anatomically modern human skeleton (*Homo sapiens*), now known as Olduvai Man, dating back approximately 17,000 years.

In 1931, archaeologist Louis Leakey partnered with Reck. Reck believed that early humans had not used stone tools in the area, but Leakey famously wagered ten pounds that he would find evidence to the contrary. On the very first day, Leakey won the bet by discovering an ancient stone hand axe. Additional Oldowan stone tools were later found throughout the gorge, dating back nearly two million years.

To visit Olduvai Gorge is to step back millions of years into the earliest chapters of human history and explore the origins of our species. Yet this site is not only for the “Indiana Jones” types. Beyond its archaeological importance and historical value, Olduvai Gorge stands as one of the planet's great natural wonders.

(Continued in the April edition of The TWGA Times)



*Mary and Louis Leakey*

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# Conscious Conservation: The Toxic Dangers of Snow Melt

By Julie Morgan



*Pair of white-tailed deer licking salt off road*

My name is Julie Morgan and I am the Community Engagement Director at The World Giraffe Alliance and a self-described conservation advocate. This is my corner of our TWGA Newsletter to inspire you, our readers, with ways to become more conscientious in helping wildlife, ourselves and Mother Earth.

This last month, with cold weather fronts pounding the northeast and even more southern regions, many people are salting their walks and driveways to prevent slipping on icy surfaces. What they may not know is that sidewalk “salt” is cocktail of mined sodium chloride and other chemicals that include “anti-caking” agents. This combination of ingredients melts snow and poisons our environment.

Wildlife, including birds, snow worms, fish, amphibians and our pets are affected. Birds see it as grit and once ingested develop acute salt poisoning that leads to dehydration, kidney and organ failure. When they stop in roads to eat it, they are hit by oncoming traffic.

Snow runoff from salted roads carries toxins into surrounding soil, water and vegetation. It drains into streams and lakes poisoning fish and amphibians.

Deer, coyotes and dogs sustain chemical burns on their paws from these caustic substances.

The United States spreads 24 million tons of road salt every year. Road salts have polluted 40% of urban streams and even one salted driveway creates a toxic zone over 100 yards wide.

Countries like Sweden and Canada have alternative solutions. In Sweden they use a mixture of beetroot extract and cornstarch which feeds the wildlife and melts the ice. In Alberta Canada they use pea gravel, sweeping it up in the spring to use the following year.

There are a variety of animal friendly products for home use to conscientiously remove ice and snow. Brands like Road Runner have no toxins, or you can be even more practical and use construction or masonry sand.

Send an email to your local city officials and ask them to switch from these toxic agents to more natural alternatives. There are tons of sand and pebble waste that could be used in this way to save money and animals. Our representatives won't know unless we tell them. Use your voice for all wildlife!

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# Where do We Draw the Line? The Environmental Impact of the AI Revolution



*Aerial view of construction of new massive Data center at the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio. As of 2024, the region had 525 data centers — with another 224 planned by 2030*

In Utopian science fiction fantasies, we imagine a world of automation, including robots that perform heart surgery and clean our houses. But as we close in on that future, sitting on the precipice of an event horizon in culture and life, we have to ask: what price are we willing to pay?

A recent poll revealed that Americans understand relatively little about the AI revolution and its impact on our world. So let's explore the most rudimentary aspects of this new technology.

First, what does it take to create generative artificial intelligence?

Energy.

Imagine the largest industries in the United States—car manufacturing, aerospace, cruise line shipbuilding, Microsoft, Apple, and Google—and the amount of energy that each of those industries consumes on a daily basis. Not one comes close to the energy necessary to create artificial intelligence.

Over the next four years, it is expected that our energy consumption for this one industry will increase by 12%.

While around the world, countries face regular loss of power, AI's demand could mean jeopardizing energy, which affects hospitals, homes, and basic business tasks such as banking. Even in the United States, during summer, states like Arizona and California experience regular brownouts, limiting energy consumption—and this is at current energy demand.

As competition for generative AI increases, so do high carbon emissions, water use for cooling, increased electronic waste (e-waste) from hardware, and resource depletion from mining raw materials.

We are looking at a huge uptick in mining for raw materials. The devastation left behind at these mining sites is largely hidden from the public. Massive destruction of natural environments, including loss of animal life and habitat, often wipes out entire species.

The carbon footprint created by AI, from manufacturing

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to operation and disposal, has not even been measured. This is one of the most invasive technologies we have ever created. As the demand for artificial intelligence increases, so will global energy demand and emissions.

Humanity's quest for progress has cost our world in many ways. Fortunately, there have always been voices of rationality and commitment to our world that have found a way to rein in runaway practices. Perhaps it is time for us to consider what embracing this level of modern living will do to our planet, animal life, breathable air, and ultimately to the people we will leave behind.

At some point, we have to stop, look around, and ask ourselves: where do we draw the line?

And can we?



*Google data center on a hazy day in Santiago, Chile  
Photo by Marcos Zegers for The New York Times*

## Meet Twiggy, the Nanny Giraffe



Twiggy the giraffe is famous. She was orphaned when she was just a few weeks old and was discovered among a herd of zebras. Wildlife rescue rangers took her to the [Kaluku Neonate Nursery in Kenya](#).

Twiggy is a naturally gentle and calm giraffe and at a few months old, she found her calling... nanny.

One day, a tiny antelope (a [dik-dik](#)) wandered into Twiggy's stall. The little antelope was very pregnant. Twiggy patiently allowed her new friend safe harbor.

When the baby antelope was born, Twiggy was guardian and protector. The mother would leave to eat or stretch, and Twiggy watched over her tiny charge.

Over the last several years, Twiggy has gained a reputation as nanny for small animals, especially babies and those that are injured. Caretakers say she lowers her long neck gently toward the smallest newcomers, standing quietly beside them as if offering reassurance. In moments of uncertainty or stress, her calm presence seems to steady the animals around her, creating a space of unusual peace within the nursery.

The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, located near Tsavo East National Park, manages a 5,000-acre preserve and rehabilitation center for orphaned, or injured wildlife.

Through rescue, veterinary care, and careful re-wilding when possible, the Trust works to return animals to their natural habitats. It is open to the public, and if you are ever near Tsavo, be sure to visit Twiggy the nanny.



*The name dik-dik comes from an onomatopoeia of the repetitive "dik" sound females make*

# Renewable Energy Projects Surge Across Great Britain

Renewable energy development is accelerating rapidly across Great Britain. By 2026, the country is expected to experience a major boom in battery storage, alongside a dramatic rise in offshore wind projects, as approvals have increased sevenfold since 2023.

According to reporting by [The Guardian's](#) Jillian Ambrose, a record number of renewable energy projects have recently received the green light. New battery, wind, and solar developments saw approval rates rise by 96% compared to 2024 alone.

Looking at the longer trend, requests for—and approvals of—battery, wind, and solar power projects have increased by more than 400% over the past five years, highlighting a decisive shift in the nation's energy strategy and long-term climate commitments.

Energy Secretary Ed Miliband welcomed the surge, stating:

“After years of delay and underinvestment, we are finally backing Britain's energy with clean, homegrown power. Every project we approve, every investment we make is about getting the country off fossil fuels.”

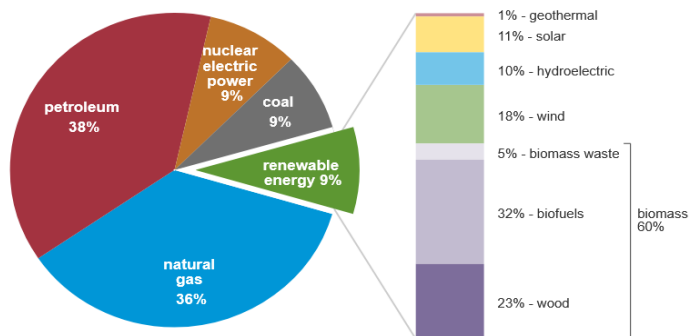
Robin Clark of [Cornwall Insight Research](#) echoed this optimism, noting that the record-breaking rise in planning approvals signals real momentum in the UK's transition to clean energy.

This rapid expansion of renewable infrastructure is

## U.S. primary energy consumption by energy source, 2023

total = 93.59 quadrillion British thermal units

total = 8.24 quadrillion British thermal units



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, Table 1.3 and 10.1, April 2024, preliminary data



excellent news for Great Britain—and even better news for the planet.

By contrast, only about 9% of total U.S. energy consumption currently comes from renewable sources, leaving the country heavily dependent on fossil fuels that accelerate climate change and habitat loss.

At The World Giraffe Alliance, we know that climate stability, healthy ecosystems, and wildlife conservation are inseparable. Clean energy is not just an environmental issue it is a conservation issue.

We encourage our readers in the United States to get behind clean, renewable energy by speaking up and getting involved. That can mean talking with your members of Congress about supporting wind, solar, and energy storage, standing behind policies that move the country away from coal, oil, and other dirty energy sources, and advocating for energy solutions that protect wildlife, strengthen communities, and safeguard the future for generations to come. The transition to renewable energy is absolutely possible, and Great Britain's progress shows what can happen when public support and political will come together.

The World Giraffe Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to the preservation of giraffes their lands and the interdependent peoples of Tanzania. Through global collaboration, we educate, raise awareness, and take action to protect nature and save these gentle giants.

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