

Kenya Launches App to Track Wildlife

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Launch (Verb) /lɔːntʃ/ to make something available to the public for the first time
Example: My favorite brand launched their new product line.
2. Track (Verb) /træk/ to follow the progress, development, or movement of something
Example: It is very easy and convenient to track the packages being delivered by Fedex.
3. Species (Noun) /spiːʃiːz/ a group of animals or plants that are similar to each other and can produce healthy young
Example: They are studying different species in their science class.
4. Mammal (Noun) /'mæməl/ a type of animal that typically gives birth to live young and feeds them with milk
Example: Dolphins are marine mammals.
5. Identify (Verb) /aɪ'dentə'faɪ/ to find out or know who or what someone or something is
Example: It's very difficult to identify her since all the members of the band all look the same specially with masks on.
6. Rare (Adjective) /rɛr/ not happening, done, found, etc. very often or in large numbers
Example: They found a rare diamond during the excavation.



Kenya's wildlife officials have launched a free phone app to help track and protect wild animals in the country. Kenya is home to nearly 400 species of mammals. Officials say it is getting more difficult to protect them, as climate change and human activities damage their natural environments.

The app is called Mammal Atlas Kenya, or Makenya, and it lets any user who sees a wild mammal identify it, add a picture and give its location, as well as some other information. "You can also add the behavior," said Dr. Simon Musila, a researcher at the National Museums of Kenya, which helped to develop the app. "When you see this animal, what are they doing? Are they resting? Are they running away? Are they feeding? What are they doing at the moment you see them?" Anyone can use the app, according to Musila, including safari guides, visitors and students. He said that this information will help the small number of mammal experts in Kenya.

Experts say that while Africa is not a major contributor to climate change, it is badly affected by it. Dr. Philip Muruthi, from the African Wildlife Foundation, said that the birth rate of rare mammals is decreasing, and fewer of these young animals are surviving. He told Voice of America that the app could add to their knowledge about the different species in the country. Wildlife officials say Kenya is home to at least a third of the mammal species in Africa and they hope that app users will help protect them.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on the Mammal Atlas Kenya app?
2. Have you been to Africa? If so, did you see a lot of wildlife? If not, do you know anyone who has?
3. Is your country home to a lot of mammal species?
4. What mammal species found in Africa are you most interested in seeing?
5. How is climate change expected to impact wildlife in your country?