



# NKHOTAKOTA

WILDLIFE RESERVE  
MALAWI

AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2015

Nkhotakota totals 1,800 km<sup>2</sup>

Partner: Malawi Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW)



280 bird species

Over 1,500 animals reintroduced in 2016



500 elephants aim to be reintroduced to the reserve by 2017



## The Story of Nkhotakota

The Afromontane-cloaked Chipata Mountain presides over Nkhotakota's miombo woodland landscape, which is spanned by a network of rivers that form a major catchment area for Lake Malawi. The park sweeps from the Great Rift Valley to within a few kilometres of the lake shore. Although the once abundant variety of wildlife has been depleted by decades of poaching, since assuming management in 2015, African Parks has already overhauled park management and law enforcement, and is undertaking a historic translocation project to restore former levels of biodiversity to Nkhotakota's wooded hills.



## The Challenge

Nkhotakota's adjacent communities are among the poorest in Malawi, and their unsustainable use of the reserve's natural resources to support their livelihoods has progressively led to the extinction, or severe depletion, of many key mammal species in the reserve. Timber harvesting, encroachment and illegal resource gathering have additionally damaged local habitats. The absence of a well-maintained perimeter fence has resulted in consistent human-wildlife conflict between animals and local people as they compete for limited resources on reserve boundaries.

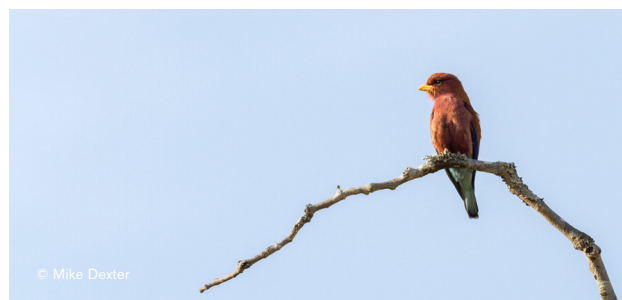


Nkhotakota is Malawi's oldest and largest protected area at 1,800 km<sup>2</sup>



## The Solution

Several strategies are required to restore the reserve and ensure adequate protection of its existing wildlife. These include the improvement of resources for scouts, the implementation of stringent law enforcement and the construction of a perimeter fence to prevent human-wildlife conflict. To compliment these by aligning peoples' interests with those of the environment, African Parks is engaging communities and other stakeholders to address areas of need, such as water provision, sustainable resource harvesting and education. A large-scale translocation project is being undertaken to aid in the recovery of certain wildlife species, including the movement of 500 elephants and hundreds of animals of other game species from Liwonde and Majete in Malawi.



## Highlights

- Scouts have been trained and supplied with new uniforms and equipment for anti-poaching patrols.
- Vehicles, roads, radios and a digital radio network have been established or upgraded.
- Law Enforcement and Community teams have collected hundreds of wire traps from within the reserve.
- A 19,000 ha sanctuary has been fenced to allow for the safe reintroduction of species, including 261 elephants and more than 1,500 head of game species in 2016.

## Next Steps

- 1 Complete the park's entire perimeter fence.
- 2 Maintain the sanctuary where 261 elephants were translocated from Liwonde in 2016, and prepare for an additional 250 elephants to be added in 2017.
- 3 Foster close community collaboration to mitigate conflict, sensitise people to the much needed perimeter fence, and review the community programme to ensure local people receive tangible benefits from the park.



African Parks is a non-profit conservation organisation that takes on direct responsibility for the rehabilitation and long-term management of national parks and protected areas, in partnership with governments and local communities. We currently manage 10 parks in seven countries – CAR, Chad, Republic of Congo, DRC, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia - with a combined area of six million hectares. Our goal by 2020 is to have 20 parks, and 10 million hectares, under management