



Crossing the Chalbi

A world first attempt to cross the Chalbi Desert, Northern Kenya,
unsupported on foot.

www.crossingthechalbi.com
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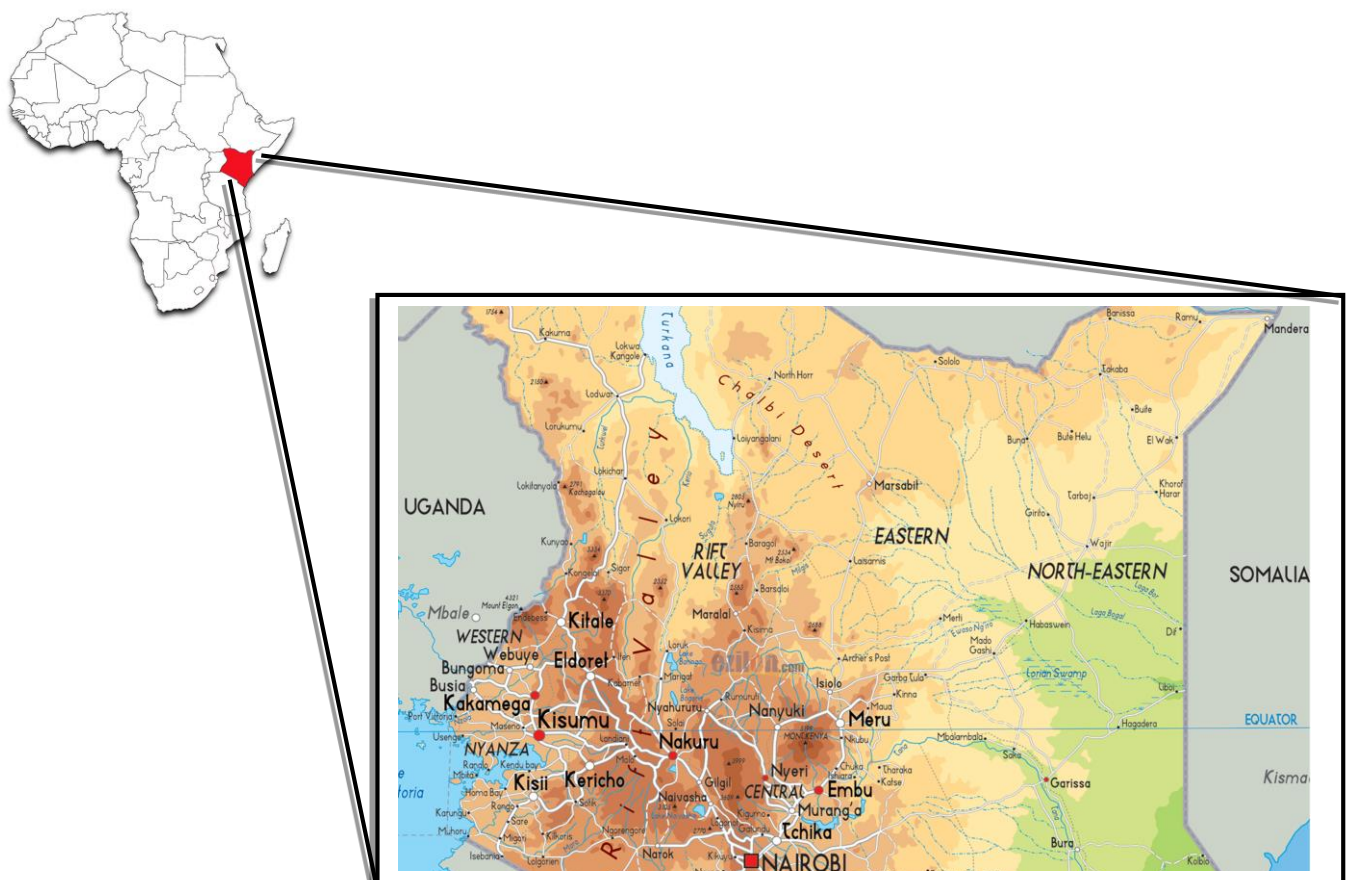
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Introduction

THE PLAN – The concept of the expedition is to be the first people to cross the Chalbi Desert, Northern Kenya, on foot and unsupported. This will take place from 29 August 2015 to 14 September 2015 and this time frame includes forward mounting to Nairobi, the move to the start line, the desert crossing itself and the return to the UK. The route is 160 miles (260km) and we estimate that this will take us 8-10 days to complete.

THE CHALBI DESERT - The Chalbi Desert is a huge area of around 100,000 sq km of virtually flat sandy desert, to the east of Lake Turkana in Northern Kenya. Long ago this area was in fact part of the lake but is now a large empty expanse. 'Chalbi' in Gabbra language means 'bare and salty' and this desert is the hottest and most arid region in Kenya. The Chalbi is a pan totally surrounded by volcanoes and ancient lava flows. The discovery of fossilised fish vertebrae and snail shells leads us to believe that there once existed a large lake some 10,000 years ago. Now the lake is an immense expanse of clay and white salt, where the horizon dissolves into a mirage.

At the time of year that the expedition will be taking place temperatures are expected to be around 40-45 degrees Celsius. Throughout the desert there are only a couple of potential water sources. However, due to the aridity at this time of year these are unreliable so we will be carrying/ pulling all the water we need for the expedition.



The Route

The expedition begins in the town of Marsabit, nestled in the centre of Marsabit National Park 330 miles north of Nairobi. From the town we will head North West towards the settlement of Maikona. To get here we will have hand railed the main road before breaking track and heading into the Chalbi Desert. The route will continue to head North East towards the small Catholic mission at Kalacha before heading west as it nears the Northern edge of the Chalbi Desert. The route finishes in the settlement of North Horr on the North Western edge of the desert. This point will signify the completion of the expedition.



The Team

HENRY HASELOCK – A 27 year old from Somerset. Currently working as a media marketer in London; Henry caught the expedition bug whilst at Gordonstoun School, Scotland. Following a number of expeditions at school Henry qualified as an Expedition Leader and has gone on to plan and lead expeditions in Mongolia, Belize and Morocco.

OLIVER TILLARD – A 28 year old from Sussex. Olli is a serving officer with The Scots Guards based in North Yorkshire. Also schooled at Gordonstoun this is where they met and begun their passion for exploring and expeditions. Being in the Army has given him skills essential to the planning and executing of expeditions. He has planned expeditions across the USA, in Germany and Scotland.

This expedition is an opportunity for both of them to push their skills to the limit in a highly testing environment. It also gives them the chance to undertake a challenge in a part of the world that fascinates them both.



ZAREK COCKAR, AFRICA & YOU – Zarek Works at Africa & You, African travel experts. He has come on board as our in country consultant sorting all preparations in Kenya. This includes the safety vehicle, armed guards and communications. His unrivalled knowledge of African travel and expedition logistics has ensured nothing is left to chance.

SIMON HALLIDAY, HALLIDAY FINCH – Simon is the Managing Director of Halliday Finch. This is an investigation and security consultancy firm based in Africa. They have been providing invaluable, up to date information regarding the security situation in Kenya. They are also providing the team with GPS trackers in order to track their progress throughout the expedition.

Logistics and Planning

KIT TRANSPORT - Due to the unsupported nature of the expedition all kit, including water, shelter, food and medical equipment will need to be carried by Olli and Henry. With temperatures in excess of 40 degrees Celsius the team is planning to consume 8 litres of water a day. The main challenge facing the team is carrying 80 litres of water, plus other supplies, for the duration of the expedition. To combat this they will each be towing a small trailer; capable of supporting loads of 80Kg. The remainder (35Kg) will be carried on their backs.

SAFETY - For safety a 4x4 will follow behind the pair remaining within sight but not close enough to impede on the expedition. This is purely a safety precaution to deal with any medical or security issue. All being well there should be no reason to have any contact with the vehicle aside from the twice daily check in.

There will also be emergency air cover provided by AMREF. This is a team of flying doctors who provide health education, cover and emergency support throughout Africa. We have been working closely with them regarding our preparation and medical evacuation plans.

Due to the instability in Northern Kenya it will be necessary to hire armed guards before we set off from Marsabit. They will travel in the safety vehicle and be on hand to deescalate any security situation as well as being on hand in case local knowledge is needed. They are likely to be members of The Kenyan Police Reserve, usually local tribesmen with useful language skills.

PLANNING – Much of the planning has been done from the UK. The trailers, food and kit are all being sourced in the UK to ensure nothing is left to chance once in Kenya. The kit will all be taken out to Kenya to ensure the time in country isn't wasted. However, everything that has to be sorted in country has been done in conjunction with our partners at Africa & You. This includes the safety vehicle, armed guards and driver.

DANGERS – Throughout the expedition there will be a number of dangers the team will face along the way. These are as follows:

- Heatstroke/ Heat injury
- Dehydration
- Local bandits
- Local wildlife

Contingency plans for all of the above have been made and include learning desert first aid, having suitable medical supplies and armed security.

The Charities

This expedition provides an excellent opportunity to raise awareness for charity. We have chosen two charities, both of which have particular ties to the expedition and its team.

VETERAN'S AID- This is a charity that works on the front line addressing homelessness, addiction and helping veterans that have fallen on hard times. Based in London they can boast of never having turned a veteran in need away and provide support in the way of a hostel, advice and financial support to get back on your feet. www.veteran-aid.net.

Last year we provided over 22,000 nights of accommodation, dealt with more than 4,000 calls for help and advice and welcomed more than 600 visitors to our main office.

There are around 4.5 million Veterans in the UK. Around 20,000 men and women leave the Armed Forces and become Veterans every year. A small number of Veterans experience problems in civilian life.

TUSK – An organisation which helps fund conservation, community projects and education programmes across Africa. Particularly prevalent due to the increasing threat to species and habitat from poaching and political unrest in many of the countries in which it operates.

Tusk supports more than 50 field projects in 18 African countries that not only work to protect wildlife, but also help to alleviate poverty through sustainable development and education amongst rural communities who live alongside the wildlife. As the ever-expanding human population and its demand for more land brings increasing conflict with wildlife, Tusk's aim is to forge an inextricable link between the preservation of Africa's natural heritage and the future of its land, culture and people.

Conservation of wildlife remains a key objective with substantial funding being applied towards the protection of threatened species such as elephant, rhino, cheetah, chimpanzee, mountain and lowland gorilla, African wild dog, giant sable and even marine species such as turtles.

Tusk has, with its partners in the field, been at the forefront of promoting and funding community driven conservation programmes. The charity's holistic approach recognises that the long-term future for wildlife is dependent on education and sustainable development.

To donate head to <http://www.justgiving.com/teams/chalbi>. From here you will be directed onto the team site that allows you to donate to either, or both charities. Up to you.

How Can You Get Involved?

There are a number of ways you as a company, organisation or individual can get involved.

- **CHARITY.** Donating directly to the aforementioned charities gives the expedition another dimension and will be doing untold good for the causes they support.
- **SPONSORSHIP.** We have worked hard to keep costs down where possible, without compromising quality or safety. However, we rely on and greatly appreciate sponsorship in the form of a financial contribution, equipment or coverage. Any contribution is recognised in media outlets (unless requested not to).
- **MEDIA.** We rely on the media to spread the word of what we are doing in order to raise awareness and generate interest. For interviews or image requests with either Olli or Henry or any other aspect of the expedition please contact us via otillard@yahoo.com or 07737332879. We are currently working with a couple of outlets but certainly welcome interest from other parties.