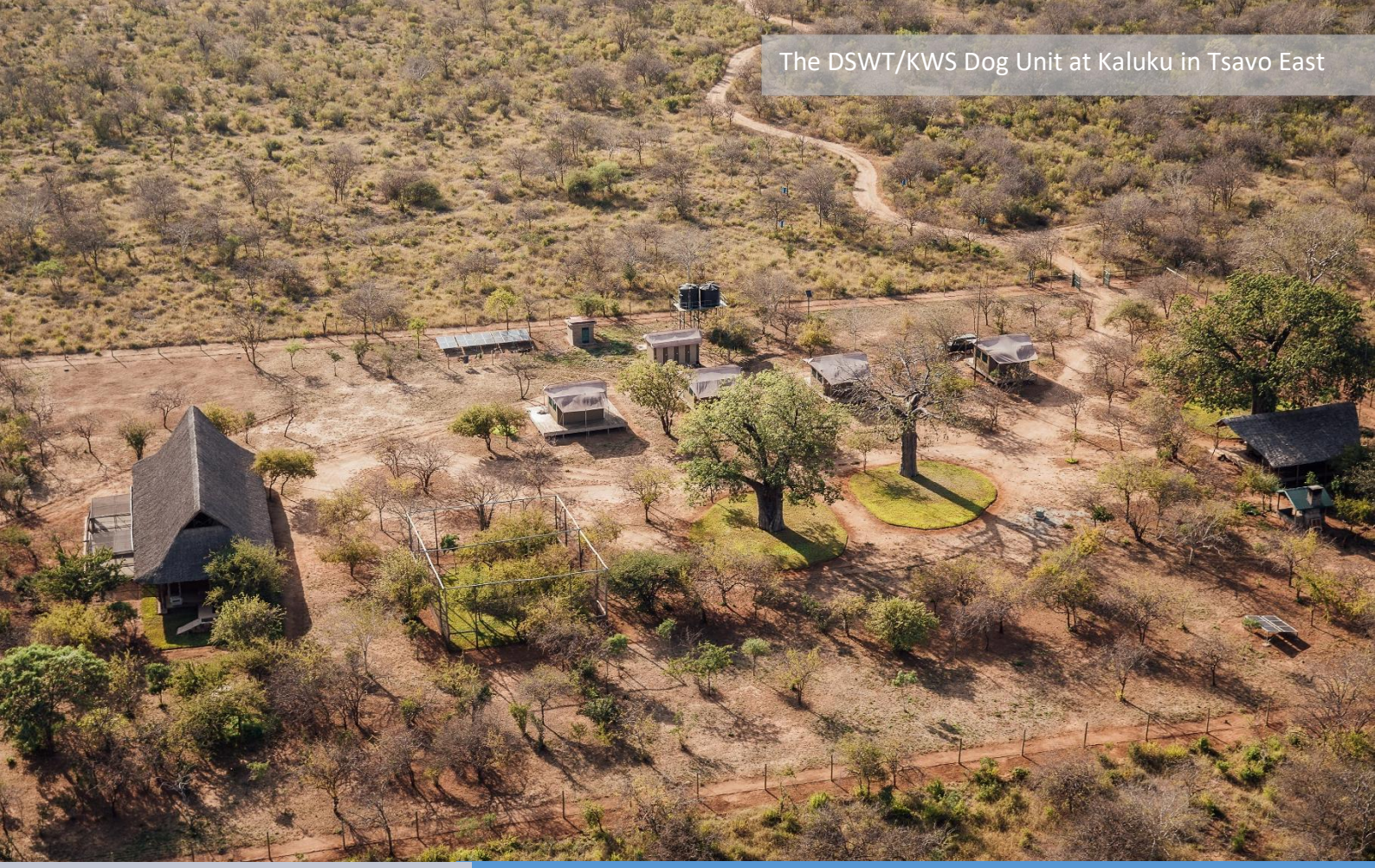
AERIAL SURVEILLANCE UNIT

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY 2018



The DSWT/KWS Dog Unit at Kaluku in Tsavo East

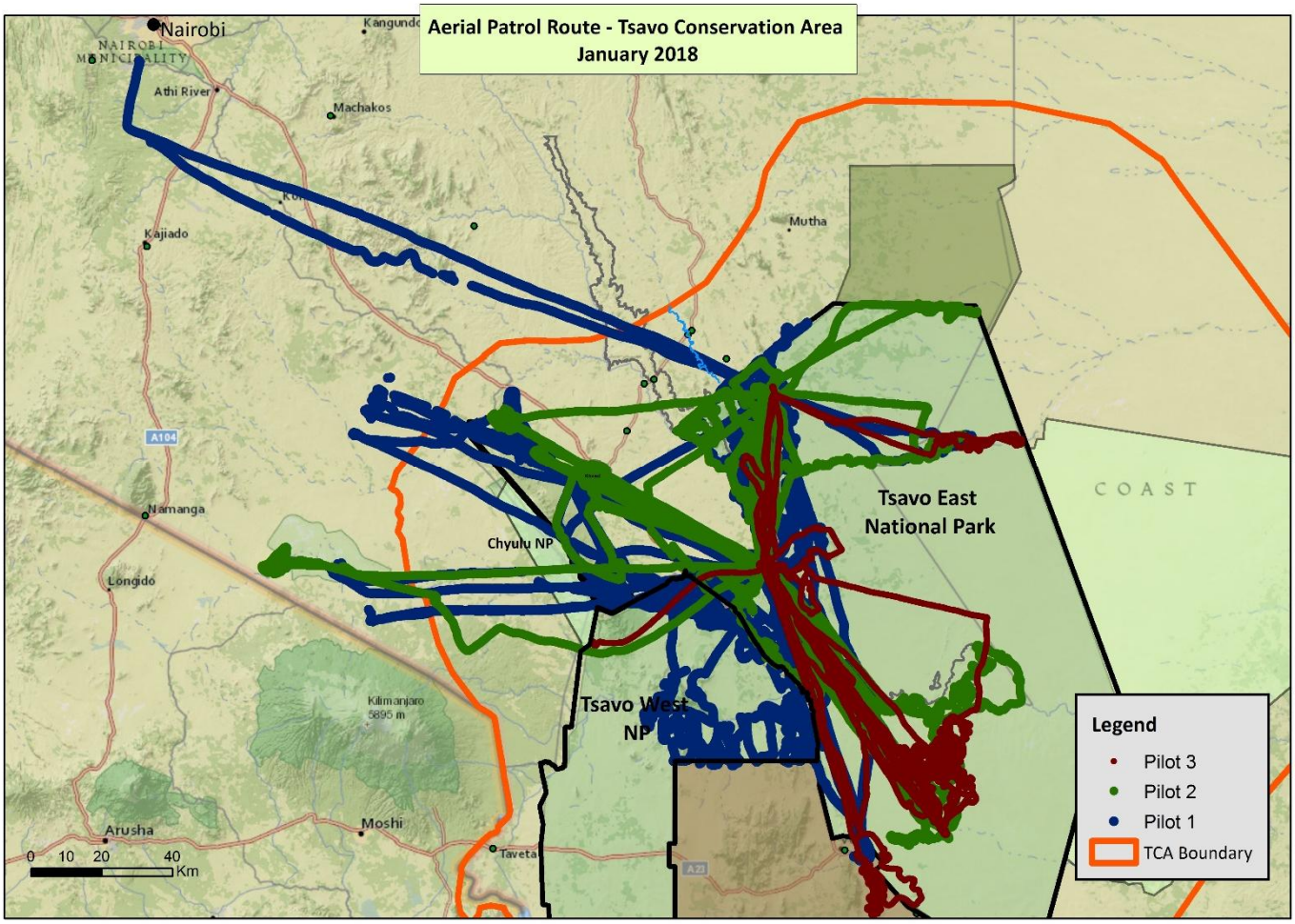
AERIAL STATISTICS

JANUARY 2018

HOURS FLOWN	**109.10**
KMS COVERED	**13,815**
AREAS PATROLLED	**Tsavo East, Tsavo West, Chyulu Hills, Amboseli, Selengei Group Ranch**

JANUARY 2018

MONTHLY AERIAL PATROL MAP



MONTHLY AERIAL SUMMARY

January was a generally positive month, with a huge drop in the number of carcasses found. Only 3 carcasses were discovered in total, all of them old, most probably remaining from the large number of elephants that died in the latter part of last year due to the harsh drought conditions that devastated southern Tsavo East in particular. As with many of the carcasses found during the drought, the DSWT and KWS teams were able to recover the majority of tusks from the carcasses, before poachers could stumble upon them.

Elephant carcasses discovered from the air. Ground teams were deployed to collect the tusks

Two of the DSWT's dedicated pilots received training on the Trust's Cessna 206 this month, which will ensure that there is always a pilot available for long-haul flights needing more than one passenger. The 206 is ideal for transporting vets and vet assistants with all their equipment to remote airstrips to treat sick or injured animals. This fixed wing aircraft can also be used to deploy rangers and/or tracking dogs or transport cargo, including small elephants if necessary.

Pilot Taru Carr Hartley at the DSWT's Kaluku airstrip in Tsavo East

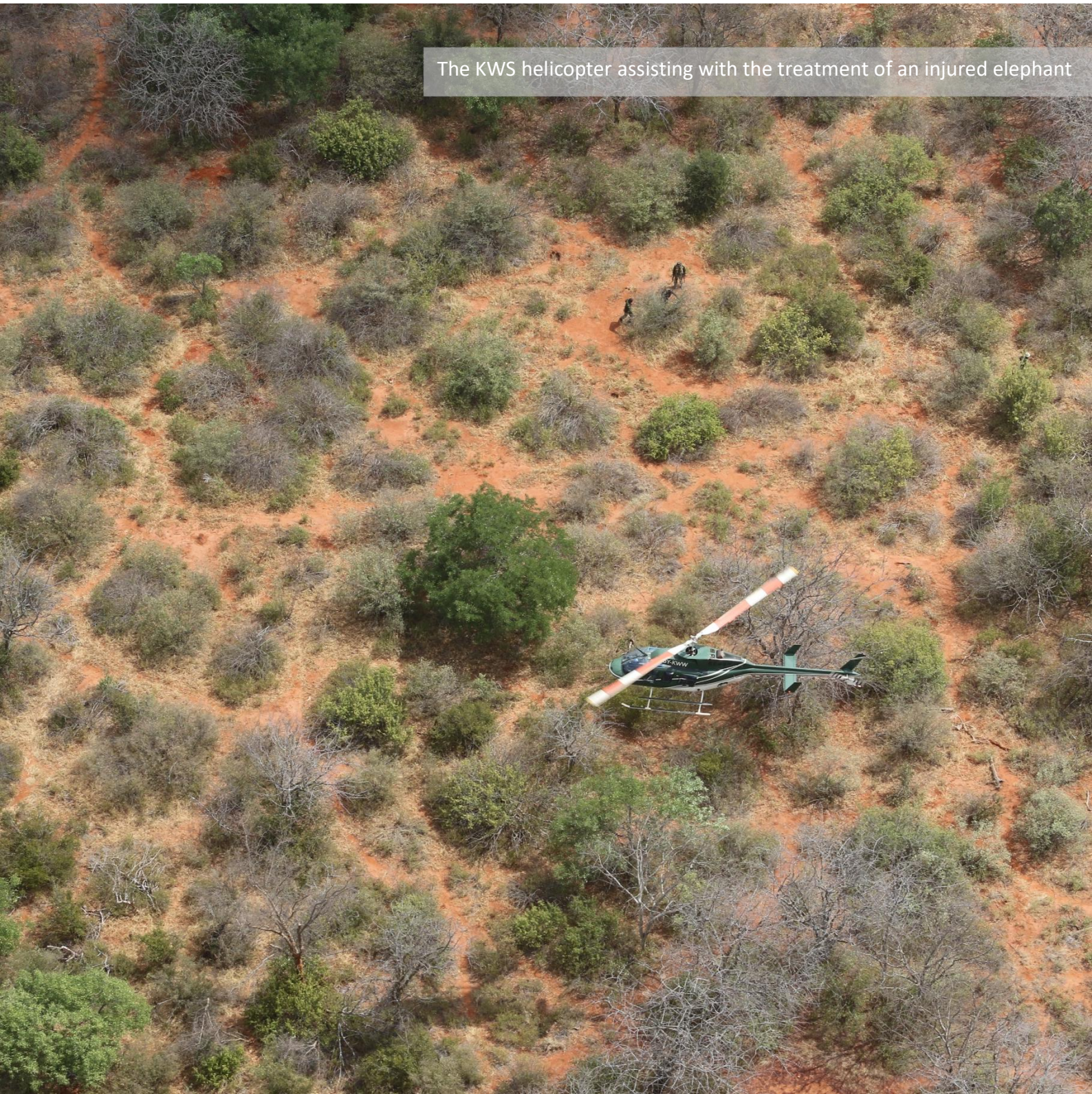
5Y-CFZ

5Y-CXP
5Y-CFZ

The helicopter pilot this month mainly flew in the new AS350 as the smaller MD500 was away for service. The focus during January was on patrolling and deploying rangers at water points around the Ithumba, Tsavo Triangle and Yatta areas. Several old harbours and shooting blinds were discovered and destroyed during these patrols, whilst only one recent shooting platform was found between these areas and likewise destroyed. In Tsavo West, between the Tsavo River and Kishushe ranch, a harbour was found and 40 snares plus other equipment were confiscated. Two old shooting platforms were also destroyed in this area. The helicopter was also able to deploy rangers to destroy 3 charcoal kilns, 2 in the Chyulu Hills and another in the Gazi area. During the month the helicopter was involved in 4 human-elephant conflict cases and assisted communities by pushing elephants out of their farms and back into protected areas.

Helicopter and rangers during aerial patrols

There were a small number of veterinary treatments for elephants facilitated by the aerial team this month. The helicopter was involved in the darting and treatment of two elephants in the Amboseli ecosystem, one with a spear wound and another with an arrow wound. On another occasion one of the DSWT's fixed wing aircrafts while on patrol sighted an injured bull elephant near Ithumba. The DSWT/ KWS Mobile Vet Unit along with the KWS helicopter flew in to assist with its successful treatment for a poisoned arrow wound. Throughout the treatment, the fixed wing aircraft was used to direct the operation on the ground, guiding the helicopter to the elephant for darting and then the ground team in by vehicle.



The KWS helicopter assisting with the treatment of an injured elephant

During January the pilots had several sightings of wild dogs, including one healthy pack of 40 individuals which was a highlight. There were also numerous sightings of leopard and lion, which is also very encouraging. Large herds of elephants were also enjoying the southern area of the Park once more with the dams still with water and the Park still green.

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