

# FLYING FOR CONSERVATION

## FROM AMERICA TO AFRICA

In June 2012 Alexis Peltier and Michel Laplace-Toulouse will embark on an intrepid journey flying a Piper Super Cub aircraft which is designed more to fly over game reserves counting wildlife than for crossing continents & oceans.

This is an incredible journey of 18000 km at a speed of 150km, even somewhat perilous in a single engine aircraft, but the goal is to reach out to as many people as possible along the route and through lectures to create awareness about the plight of Africa's wildlife outside protected areas in Africa and more particularly in Kenya's Shompole Group Ranch. At Shompole Alexis and Michel are assisting the local communities to protect their wildlife. In today's world where everything is money driven, wildlife has also to earn its keep. Funds raised along the way will help these local communities who live amongst Africa's great wildlife, to understand better its value and assist them in it's protection.



Alexis  
Peltier  
- the  
Pilot

Alexis  
was  
once  
the

youngest pilot in Canada. He was also the holder of the Microlight Altitude World Record. Now after piloting for 32 years he has flown over 7000 hours all terrains, mainly in Africa but also in Canada, Alaska, France. He had cross South America from Patagonia to Caribbean via USA in a light open plane . Alexis lives in Kenya where he does a lot of low flying projects such as wildlife counting for Kenya Wildlife Service and forestry & tree surveying for the Kenya Forest Service since 1988 when he created, Wings for Earth Maisha trust. He also operates flying safaris in some of the most remote parts of East Africa

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*In earlier days while Alexis was busy experimenting in the sky, Michel was involved in transoceanic crossings on*

**Michel Laplace-Toulouse**  
**Co-Pilot & Navigator**

*sailing yachts, still in the days before arrival of the GPS. From sailing he moved into tourism and ran intrepid 4x4 safaris in North Africa crossing the Egyptian & Libyan deserts using a sextant to map the routes. Michel now operates a tourism business in Kenya specialising in walking*

  
*safaris as well as a film & photographic production company. He is also a photographer and has worked on many films such as the Winged Migration of Jacques Perrin, Man to Man of Regis Wargnier & the Ushuaia series of Nicolas Hulot.*

## THE AIRCRAFT

The first Piper Super Cub came off the production line in 1949 and were produced up until 1994. They been used and abused as trainers, dusters and sprayers, banner towers, pipeline patrollers, border patrollers, military liaison aircraft, bush planes and in any other way pilots could think of. In Kenya they are widely used by



wildlife conservation organisations such as the Kenya Wildlife Service. The modified version for this expedition will have wheels almost as big as a Boeing 737, to enable it to land in terrain where one would think twice about driving a four wheel drive. Once landed in Kenya Alexis will continue to use the aircraft for his work in conservation.



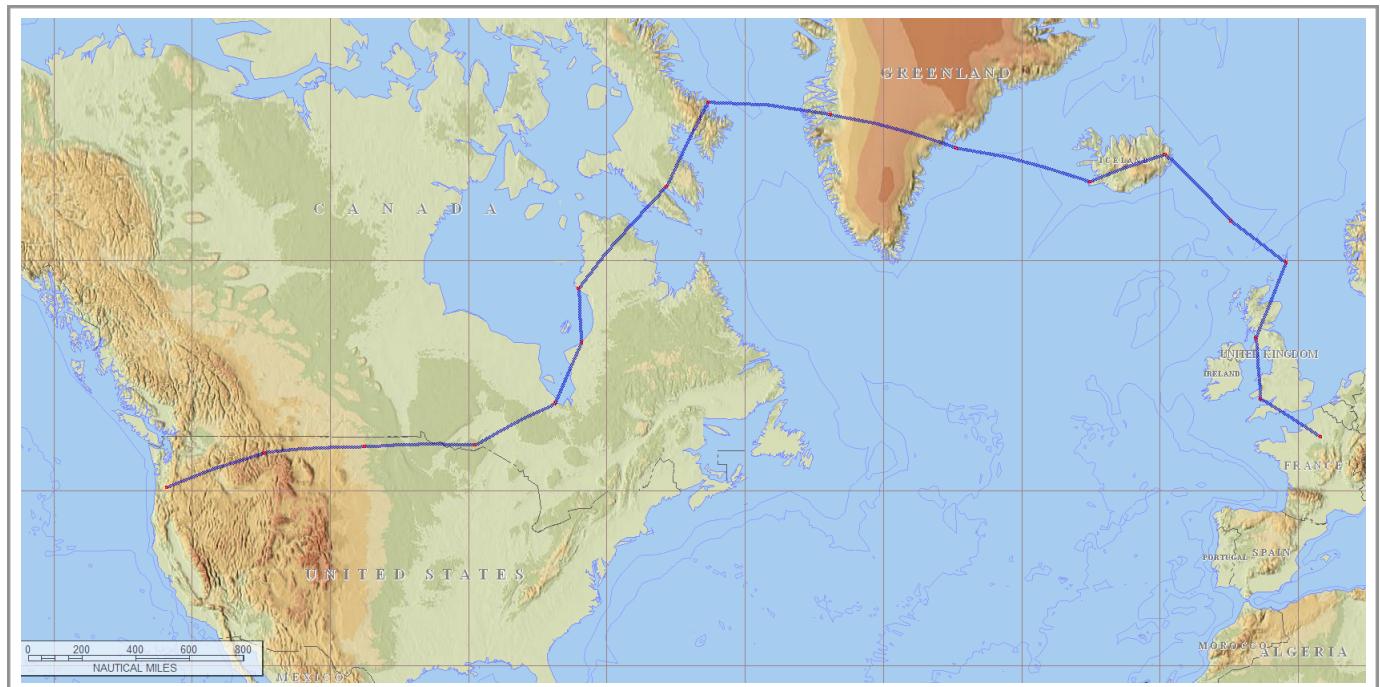
**Piper Super Cub N 7878D**  
Fuel Capacity: 67 US gallons  
Fuel flow: 8 US gallons per hour  
True air speed: 80 knots  
Endurance: 8.3 hours - 664 Nm



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## THE JOURNEY - Part 1: Portland USA to Paris, France - June 2012

Most aircraft of this speed and size would be put in a shipping container and sent off to Africa. This would be a simpler solution indeed as the aircraft is unable to cross the Atlantic Ocean due to its limited flying range. "We will have to travel north close to the Arctic Circle in northern Canada, then across Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Scotland. We will keep distances manageable but conditions will be difficult due to the extreme weather and Arctic conditions. There is nothing very green about Greenland, even in spring, icing of the wind and bad weather can make flying very dangerous. Crew must wear immersion suits as just one of the many stringent conditions to be complied with.



Many aircraft have disappeared over the years when flying over the North Atlantic region. This will be a real challenge for us and the Super Cub. Our big wheels will allow us to land outside of airfields and in case of bad weather, but they will also slow us down. The long flying sectors over water from Iceland to the Faroe Islands and to Scotland will also be very delicate and require very careful planning due to fog and strong winds in the area. When arriving in England will have to tackle another type of challenge, some of the heaviest air traffic in the world, quite different from what we are used to in Africa where one disappears from the radar screens very quickly.

"At each stop along the way we will present lectures in Aeroclubs, Rotary Clubs, Conservation Societies and similar organisations. We will introduce American, Canadian, Greenlanders and others to the beauty and importance of wildlife conservation and local communities living in harmony in Africa."

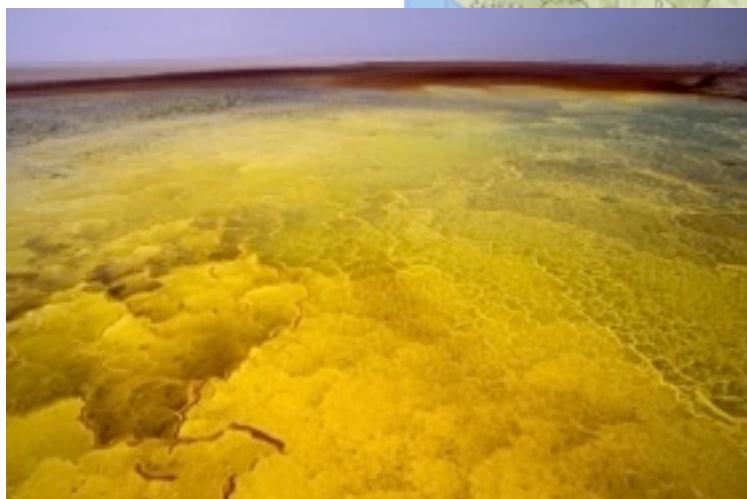
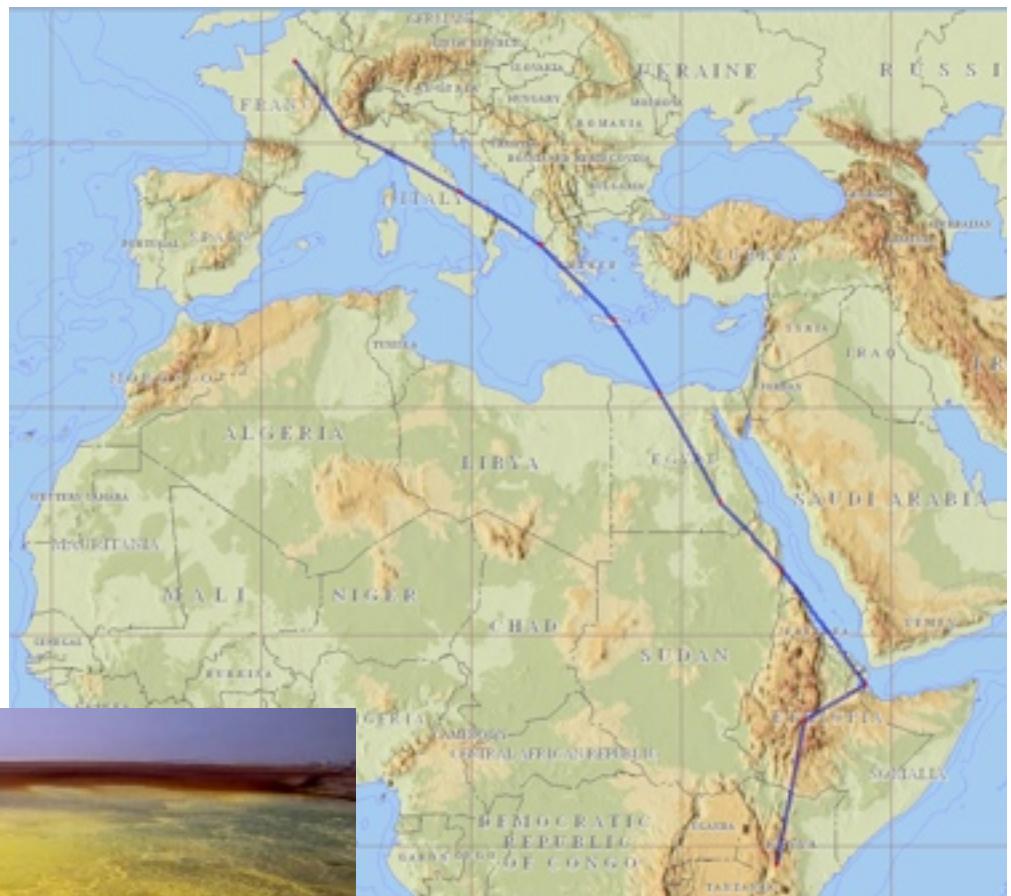


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## THE JOURNEY - Part 2: Paris, France to Nairobi, Kenya

"This second leg, will be a totally different challenge with long stretches of flying over the Mediterranean Sea and vast expanses of dry and hot deserts of northern Africa. Flying mostly at low altitude and sometimes even below sea level like in the Danakil Depression of Djibouti, and then crossing ranges well above 4000 metres such as the Simien Mountains in Ethiopia. Dust, heat, and some war areas will require delicate navigation of a different kind.

There again at each stop along the way we will organise lectures and presentations though clubs but also through the French Cultural Centres in Africa."



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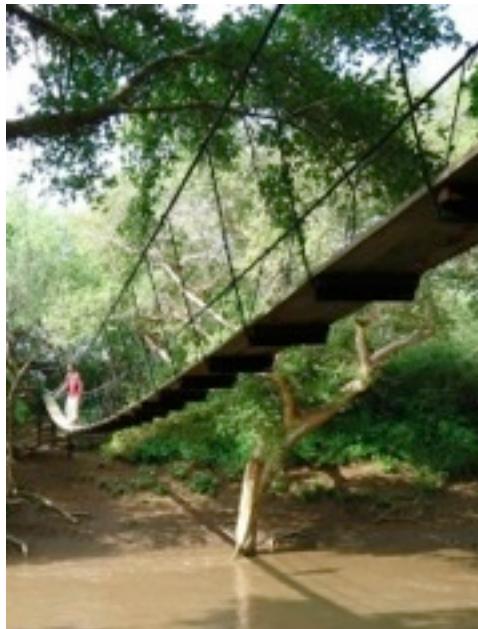
## Mwitu Na Watu Charitable Trust



Created just two years ago by Robyn Boyd and Michel Laplace-Toulouse, the Trust runs conservation efforts developed by the Trustees.

The Trust is

involved in supporting several projects, such as an orphanage of 72 children in Kibera, Nairobi and a family of internally displaced refugees near the Ethiopian border. But the Trust's main goal is to support Community Orientated Wildlife Projects such as the Shompole Group Ranch in Southern Kenya. For the last two years the Trust has assisted in the building and creation of a community owned lodge in the area, Loisiijo Lodge Shompole. ([www.loisijolodgeshompole.org](http://www.loisijolodgeshompole.org)) They have also built a footbridge across the Ewaso Ngiro River to facilitate crossing the flooding river for the local Maasai people.



### Shompole Group Ranch, Southern Kenya

*750 Maasai families living on 67000 HA have joined together and have created a 10000 HA wildlife conservation sanctuary on their land. They understand the importance of preserving their unique environment. In the past 6 years the wildlife has made an amazing*



*recovery, the natural environment has been preserved and restored. Re-emerging and thriving wetlands have attracted an increasing number of wildlife and birds. This sanctuary has the potential of becoming an important wildlife area equivalent to some of the best Kenyan national parks. To achieve this goal, more visitors need to visit the Shompole Group Ranch to assist the local community in generating revenue for the sustainability and operation of the Conservancy. It is only by proving to these people who are living next to the wildlife, that it is the lions, the zebras and*

*elephants that are providing the money to fund facilities such as schools and health dispensaries, that we will protect the wildlife.*

*Through their journey Alexis and Michel hope to raise awareness about the wildlife of the Shompole Conservancy, its Rangers and the needs of the Maasai people of the area.*

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