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Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Walking for wildlife

*National Geographic* profile: Mike Fay

**1** He’s a biologist with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). He’s lived in central Africa for six years.

**2** Fay has worked on several major conservation projects in Africa and America. He’s counted all the elephants in the central African country of Chad – twice! He’s walked nearly 3,000 kilometres across North America. He spends so much time outdoors that he hasn’t slept in a bed more than 50 times in the last ten years!

**3** A few years ago, he survived a plane crash! And on one trip, he came face to face with a very angry elephant which attacked him. Amazingly, his injuries weren’t life-threatening. Less dramatically, but just as seriously, he’s had malaria in Africa many times and on one occasion he nearly died.

**4** Fay travels light – he usually just takes a T-shirt, a pair of shorts and his favourite footwear, sandals. His most recent pair of sandals lasted 2,000 kilometres before they fell apart! The few items he never travels without include his penknife, a lighter and a sleeping mat.

**5** Fay wants to show people how beautiful and precious the planet is so they will take care of it. And he succeeds. His work has drawn attention to conservation issues and made people act. After he started work on the elephant project in Chad, the number of elephant deaths fell significantly. And in Gabon, the government has created thirteen new national parks covering 26,000 square kilometres of forest.

trek (n) /trek/ a long, difficult journey, usually on foot

Life