



Game Report



A hamerkop flying with nesting material by Ranger Gareth Nuttall-Smith

MalaMala Game Reserve
July 2022

It's all about the wildlife!

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	27	24	Maximum	81	75
Minimum	6	11	Minimum	43	52
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
5		0.19		1	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	74
Leopard	118
Elephant	158
Buffalo	74
Cheetah	6
Cape Hunting Dog	7

**Sightings are tallied by day and not by drive. E.g., an individual leopard seen during the morning and afternoon drive on the same day is regarded as a single sighting.*

KILL STATS	
Lion	2 impala, 1 baboon, 2 Cape buffalo
Leopard	7 impala, 3 duikers, 2 bushbuck, 2 Cape porcupine
Cheetah	1 impala, 1 nyala
Cape Hunting Dog	No recorded kills

**AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS*

LION PRIDES

THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 21

3 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 4 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 1 MONTH
6 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 3 YEARS 11 MONTHS
5 SUB ADULT MALES	± 3 YEARS 11 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 2 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	3 YEARS 2 MONTHS
2 CUBS	1 YEAR 4 MONTHS

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

(31 sightings)

As we have come to expect, this prides dynamic is incohesive.

The month's highlight was the birth of a new litter of cubs. Unfortunately, a large male leopard was seen at the den within two weeks of birth. The leopard killed all of the newest cubs.

Noteworthy sightings:

- Three lionesses were south of Campbell Koppies on the 1st.
- There were three lionesses at Kapen Rocks on the 2nd and 3rd. On the 3rd, one lioness was seen with afterbirth, and a glimpse of three newborn cubs was caught.
- Two lionesses kept the company of two Ndhzenga males at Princess Alice Pans on the 7th.
- The lionesses with the older cubs were east of Campbell Koppies on the 9th.
- A sub-adult male was with an adult female south of the Causeway on the 12th.
- On the 14th, a sub-adult male was with four lionesses when the five lions were east of Piccadilly Triangle.
- Four lionesses and four young cubs were at Kapen Rocks on the 15th.
- Also, on the 15th, one female mated with a Ndhzenga male around Princess Alice Pans.
- The 16th was a sombre day in the life of this pride as they lost their newest litter of cubs to a male leopard.
- On the 23rd, the two lionesses and two older cubs were around Sand Pit Crossing.
- A young lioness mated with a Ndhzenga male south of the Five-Star junction on the 24th.
- Seven lionesses and two Ndhzenga males were together at Sand Pit Crossing on the 25th. The same grouping, minus one lioness, were together again on the 26th when they were in the western parts of Matshapiri Open Area.
- On the 27th, seven lionesses and two Ndhzenga males were around the White Cloth.
- The two lionesses and older cubs attempted to hunt a buffalo bull on the 30th, west of Bicycle Crossing.
- On the last evening of the month, two lionesses killed an impala in the area of Flockfield Tower.

THE NKUHUMA PRIDE = 22

1 ADULT FEMALE	± 10 YEARS 1 MONTH
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	± 9 YEARS 4 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 2 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	± 6 YEARS 0 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 3 YEARS 0 MONTHS
5 SUB ADULT MALES	± 3 YEARS 0 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	2 YEARS 7 MONTHS
7 CUBS	± 1 YEAR 3 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

(11 sightings)

In recent months, we have enjoyed more frequent sightings of the sub-adults of this pride. Sightings of the three females with the seven cubs remain consistent. Both groupings appear to be spending more time together.

Noteworthy sightings:

- Four sub-adult males and two sub-adult females were south of Stwise on the 3rd.
- Two lionesses, seven cubs and the Northern Avoca males were at the Mlowathi Spot on the 7th.
- On the 14th, 17 members of this pride shared a buffalo cow carcass with the Northern Avoca males.
- The same group of lions was at Mlowathi Dam on the 15th. On the 16th, the sub-adults had left, and just the females, cubs and Northern Avoca males remained at Mlowathi Dam.
- On the 20th, 19 lions, including the two Northern Avoca males, killed a young buffalo bull around the Old Borehole.
- Four sub-adult males, two sub-adult females and two adult females were at the Sausage Spot on the 22nd.
- On the 23rd, three adult females, two sub-adult females, five sub-adult males, and seven cubs were together at Tlebe Rocks.
- The three lionesses, seven cubs and two Northern Avoca males were southwest of Matshapiri Dam on the 28th.
- The last time members of this pride were seen for the month was on the 30th, when five sub-adult males, two sub-adult females and one adult female were northeast of Mlowathi Dam.

THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 1

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE
MARTHLY
(7 sightings)

3 YEARS 4 MONTHS

The Marthly lioness made her presence known in the first half of the month, with sightings recorded on seven days, all within a kilometre radius of MalaMala Camp.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The first sighting of this lion was on the 3rd when she was west of Bicycle Crossing.
- She provided a show for guests on the 7th when she killed a baboon opposite MalaMala Camp.
- She moved north and was around Bicycle Crossing on the 14th, 15th and 16th.

THE SAND RIVER PRIDE = 14

2 ADULT FEMALES

± 9 YEARS 0 MONTHS

2 ADULT FEMALES

± 4 YEARS 0 MONTHS

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE

2 YEARS 6 MONTHS

3 CUBS

1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

6 CUBS

± 11 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

(3 sightings)

On the 8th, six members of this pride had the remains on an impala kill west of Mister's Koppies. The full complement of this pride was together at KK Crossing on the 9th. Finally, all 14 members of the pride were together again on the 23rd, when they were at Rocky Crossing.

THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 20

7 ADULT FEMALES

UNKOWN AGES

6 ADULT FEMALES

± 6 YEARS 6 MONTHS

7 CUBS

± 1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

EASTERN EYREFIELD

(1 sighting)

Two young males and two young females were southeast of Clarendon Dam on the 16th – this is the only time members of this pride were seen for the month

MALE LIONS

THE NDHZENGA MALES = 4

2 ADULT MALES

± 7 YEARS 5 MONTHS

2 ADULT MALES

± 7 YEARS 0 MONTHS

WESTERN CHARLESTON

Dominant for the Styx and Southern Prides.

First Encountered on MalaMala September 2020

(30 sightings)

The presence of this coalition remained constant throughout July. Sightings were recorded on 30 of the 31 days of the month. With the loss of the newest litter of Kambula cubs, we expect these males to maintain a rigorous mating schedule as the lionesses come into oestrus again.

Noteworthy sightings:

- One male was southwest of West Street on the 2nd.
- On the 3rd and 4th, a male was alone around Flockfield Pool.
- Two males were with two females from the Kambula pride on the 7th. They were south of Princess Alice Pans.
- Only lacking one member, three males were together in Kapen Open Area on the 11th. The three were together again on the 13th north of Hyena Waterhole, this time with a lioness from the Kambula pride.
- A male mated with a lioness from the Kambula pride east of Princess Alice Pans on the 15th.
- On the 22nd, three males were with nine lionesses from the Kambula Pride around Charleston North Crossing.
- Two males kept the company of two older and two younger lionesses in Jackalsdraai Open Area on the 23rd.
- On the 24th, the male with the abdominal protrusion mated with a Kambula lioness around the Five-Star junction.
- On the 26th, a male was with a lioness from the Kambula pride east of Plank's Pan. On the same day, two more males were with six Kambula lionesses in Matshapiri Open Area.
- On the closing day of the month, one male was with three lionesses opposite Rattray's Camp. On the same day, two more males were with three Kambula lionesses opposite Maxim's Lookout. Mating activity was recorded.

THE NORTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES

± 9 YEARS 1 MONTH

WESTERN EYREFIELD

Dominant over the Nkuhuma pride.

First encountered in late 2019.

(9 sightings)

Sightings of this coalition were recorded on nine days this month. On seven of the nine days, they kept the company of members of the Nkuhuma pride. As such, details of their whereabouts are accounted for in the Nkuhuma pride section.

THE SOUTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES

± 9 YEARS 5 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Sand River Pride.

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve

(0 sightings)

No sightings of this coalition were recorded this month.

Other Lions Encountered:

- Two **UNKNOWN** young females were west of Trollip's Camp on the 2nd.
- An **UNKNOWN** young male was chased south from the Mlowathi Spot by the Northern Avoca males and members of the Nkuhuma pride on the 7th.
- Members of the **STYX PRIDE** were seen in northwest Toulon on the 18th.
- An **UNKNOWN** male was on the KNP Break, south of the Split Rock Donga, on the 21st.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED

74 (21 + Styx cubs)

LEOPARDS

FEMALE LEOPARDS:

THE ISLAND FEMALE

2 CUBS

9 YEARS 5 MONTHS

3 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Tamboti female[†], independent first quarter of 2015.

Mother of the Daughter of the Island female.

(10 sightings; 8 of female, 1 of female and cubs, 1 of cubs)

Unfortunately, it would appear that the Island female has lost her most recent litter of cubs. Nevertheless, this month she was recorded mating with the Maxim's male and traversing territories that belong to other females, presumably searching for males to mate with.

Noteworthy sightings:

- On the 4th, one cub was seen at the den-site, near the lower reaches of the Matshapiri River.
- The female joined her cub at the den site on the 5th.
- The female had a kill stolen by the Marthly lioness when she was south of the Causeway.
- The female was north of Rattray's Camp on the 21st.
- On the 27th, the Island female was around MalaMala Camp. Later that day, she linked up with the Maxim's male around Bicycle Crossing; the two were recorded mating.
- She had a young bushbuck kill east of the Old Airstrip on the 28th.
- The last sighting of this female was on the 31st when she was south of West Street.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE ISLAND FEMALE

1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Island female, independent February 2022.

(6 sightings)

Sightings of the daughter of the Island female were enjoyed for six days this month. One month shy of her second birthday, this charismatic leopard is almost due a name.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The first sighting was on the 2nd when she was west of Matshapiri Open Area.
- On the 15th, she casually strolled through a crash of dehorned rhinoceros west of Emsagwen Crossing.
- The young female was around West Street on the 26th.
- On the last day of the month, she was west of White Cloth.

THE NKOVENI FEMALE

9 YEARS 11 MONTHS

2 FEMALE CUBS

1 YEAR 6 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLI

*Daughter of the Mashaba female, independent early 2014.**Mother of the Plaque Rock female.*

(23 sightings, 7 of female, of 1 female and cub/s, 15 of cub/s)

Sightings of this group of leopards remain consistently high. While the female was only seen once with her daughters, she still accepts them in her territory and has been observed contact calling for them, even when they are too strong-willed to respond to their mother.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The female was alone on the 1st when she was south of the MalaMala Stones.
- The cubs were together at Bicycle Crossing on the 2nd.
- On the 3rd, the female and one cub were seen around MalaMala Camp, although not together.
- On the 14th, the 3:2 cub welcomed guests at the entrance to MalaMala Camp while her mother explored the eastern bank of the Sand River, south of the Causeway.
- Both the 3:2 cub and the 2:2 cub were seen on Jeremiah's Loop on the 17th, though they were not seen together.
- On the 21st, the female was east of the Old Airstrip.
- The 2:2 cub took her turn playing gate guard and was around the entrance to MalaMala Camp on the evening of the 28th.
- The last member of this trio to be seen for the month was the 3:2 cub. She was east of the MalaMala Stones on the 31st.

THE SIBUYE FEMALE

8 YEARS 6 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female, independent first quarter of 2016.**Mother of the Tlebe Rocks female, Langa female & Xaxa male.*

(1 sighting)

The only record of this female was on the 10th when she was around Mlowathi Pans. This area of her territory overlaps with her eldest daughter's territory, the Tlebe Rocks female.

**THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE
MALE CUB**

4 YEARS 6 MONTHS
8 MONTHS

CENTRAL & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Daughter of the Sibuye Female, independent second quarter 2019.
(2 sightings, 1 of female, 1 of female and cub)

True to her nature, the Tlebe Rocks female seldom walks on roads, making her a difficult leopard to track. As a result, only two sightings were recorded of this duo this month.

On the 6th, the female was alone around Mlowathi Pans. On the 26th, the Tlebe Rocks female, cub and Ngoboswan male shared the remains of a duiker kill east of Piccadilly Triangle.

**THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE
MALE CUB**

6 YEARS 3 MONTHS
1 YEAR 0 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Kikilezi female[†], orphaned on 22nd May 2017.
(13 sightings, 8 of female, 5 of female and cub)

Sightings of the Three Rivers female and her cub were enjoyed on 13 days this month. Now larger than his mother, the cub of the Three Rivers female is providing top-class leopard viewing.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The mother and cub were together on the 2nd in the Sand River, south of West Street.
- Both leopards fed on the remains of an impala ewe south of Petrie's Camp on the 7th. They had another impala ewe kill in the same area on the 13th and 14th.
- On the 24th and 25th, the female was alone around Confluence Crossing.
- In an exciting sighting, this female was with her older sister, the Piccadilly female, and the Maxim's male, south of Confluence Crossing. Both females were recorded mating with the Maxim's male, with little aggression towards one another.
- Mother, cub and the Lookout female were in the area of West Street on the 29th. The cub entertained himself by hunting baboons in the canopy of the large trees that line the banks of the Sand River.

**THE EMSAGWENI FEMALE
2 CUBS**

12 YEARS 7 MONTHS
10 MONTHS

NORTH/EASTERN MALAMALA AND EYREFIELD

Daughter of the Kikilezi female[†], independent first quarter of 2012.
Mother of the Ngoboswan and Eyrefield Males.
(0 sightings)

Neither the Emsagweni female nor her cubs were seen this month. We believe it is still too soon to speculate about her condition but remain realistic about the possibility that the sun may have set on the life of this female.

THE PLAQUE ROCK FEMALE

4 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Nkoveni female, independent last quarter of 2019.

(3 sightings)

The Plaque Rock female was seen for three days in July. The most noteworthy of the three sightings included mating activity with the Maxim's male on the 23rd (south of the Causeway) and the 24th (south of West Street).

THE PICCADILLY FEMALE

8 YEARS 6 MONTHS

DAUGHTER

2 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

Daughter of the Kikilezi female[†], independent first quarter of 2016.

(7 sightings)

The Piccadilly female was one of four females seeking the attention of the Maxim's male this month. Her drive to mate compelled her to venture far from her territory in search of a suitable mate.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The first sighting of this leopard was on the 7th when she was in Piccadilly Triangle.
- On the 16th, she was around Elephant Rock.
- She was in the heart of the Sibuye female's territory when she had a hoisted duiker kill east of the Gowrie Boom on the 23rd.
- On the 28th, she was seen far south of her typical range around Confluence Crossing. She was not alone; both the Maxim's male and the Three Rivers female were with her. She mated with the Maxim's male regularly.
- The last sighting of this female was on the 29th when she was alone at West Street Bridge.

THE LOOKOUT FEMALE

± 12 YEARS 6 MONTHS

CUB

3 MONTHS

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

Mother of the Kapen female & Son of the Lookout female.

(11 sightings, 4 of female, 7 of female and cub)

Sightings of this female were noted on 11 days this month. Her cub remains shy and small, but slowly it is becoming comfortable around vehicles.

Noteworthy sightings:

- Mother and cub were in the central part of the Tamboti Thickets on the 3rd and 4th.
- The pair were seen on the 13th when they were south of Styx Rocks.
- The mother took her cub to a bushbuck kill south of the Three House on the 24th. The leopards remained in the area for the next two days.
- The female made an unexpected appearance on the 29th when she was in the same area as the Three Rivers female and cub around West Street.

**THE KAPEN FEMALE
MALE CUB**

4 YEARS 9 MONTHS
9 MONTHS

SOUTHERN FLOCKFIELD

Daughter of the Lookout female, independent first quarter of 2019.

(0 sightings)

No sightings of this female have been recorded since April. Long absences are expected for this female as her territory includes a lower road density than most other leopards on MalaMala.

MALE LEOPARDS

THE MAXIM'S MALE

± 7 YEARS 11 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD & MALAMALA

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in early 2019.

(11 sightings)

The Maxim's male flaunted his popularity with the female leopards this month.

Noteworthy sightings:

- On the 23rd and 24th, he mated with the Plaque Rock female. The pair were first found south of the Causeway, but by the conclusion of their copulation, they were around Flockfield Camp.
- On the 27th, the Island female found favour with this male as the two mated around Bicycle Crossing.
- By the 28th, the Maxim's male was around Confluence Crossing, where he took turns mating with the Piccadilly and Three Rivers females.

THE NGOBOSWAN MALE

4 YEARS 8 MONTHS

MARTHLY & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Son of the Emsagweni female, independent late 2019.

(10 sightings)

Sightings of this young territorial male were consistent this month.

Noteworthy sightings:

- On the 5th, he was around Fred's Tree.
- On the 6th, he had remains of a porcupine kill hoisted in a tree south of Fred's Tree. Two lionesses lay in wait at the base of the tree, hoping to enjoy a taste of his unusual meal.
- He was north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing on the 9th.
- On the 19th, he was opposite MalaMala Camp.
- He visited his presumed offspring when he fed on remains of a duiker kill that the Tlebe Rocks female and cub had, east of Piccadilly Triangle on the 26th.
- The last confirmed sighting of this male was on the 29th when he was around the Causeway.

THE ACCIPITER MALE

± 11 YEARS 11 MONTHS

*EASTERN & CENTRAL MALAMALA & FLOCKFIELD**First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.*

(3 sightings)

Three sightings were enjoyed of this large male this month. He was first seen for the month on the 4th when he was north of White Cloth. The next time he was seen was on the 10th, when he was south of West Street. The last sighting of this male was on the 25th when he feasted on a duiker kill in the Ngoboswan Donga.

THE EYREFIELD MALE

4 YEARS 8 MONTHS

NOMADIC (Eastern Eyrefield and eastern MalaMala)

Son of the Emsagweni female, independent late 2019.

(2 sightings)

This nomadic male was seen twice in July.

He followed his example by killing a porcupine north of Fred's Tree on the 23rd. Unfortunately, hyenas stole his meal. He was in the same area the following day.

THE SPLIT ROCK MALE

8 YEARS 0 MONTH

*CHARLESTON**Son of the Ostrich Koppies female[†], independent latter half of 2015.*

(1 sighting)

The only sighting of this male was west of Charleston Koppies on the 10th.

Other Leopards Encountered:

- On the 14th, the **TENGILE FEMALE** was with both of her cubs north of KK Crossing, where they fed on an impala ewe.
- The **INYATHINI MALE** was seen four times this month. He was seen on the first day of the month, around Cuckoo Pans. The next time he was seen was on the 8th, when he was north of Confluence Crossing. On the 18th, he made himself known as he presented himself on the Rattray's Camp main deck. The last sighting of this older male was on the 24th when he was seen at the Old Dudley Crossing.
- A relaxed **NO ID** male was northwest of Mlowathi Dam on the 13th.
- The **REDHAWK MALE** was recorded for three days. On the 2nd, he was around Matshapiri Open Area Crossing. He was around Emsagwen Open Area on the 26th.
- The **PLAQUE ROCK** female was opposite MalaMala camp on the 3rd. She mated with the Maxim's male on the 23rd, around the Causeway. The two leopards were mating again on the 24th, around West Street.
- On the 11th, the **FLAT ROCK MALE** was seen on four days this month. He was north of Kigelia Crossing on the 4th. On the 16th, he had an impala kill west of Kigelia Crossing. He remained in this area the following day.

- A **NO ID** male was south of West Street on the 15th.
- Also, on the 16th, the **FLOCKFIELD MALE** was seen around Ivory Pans.
- The **N'WETI MALE** was at Baumont's Camp on the 18th.
- The **TSHABALALA MALE** was seen once this month. On the 25th, he lost an impala ewe kill to a pack of Cape hunting dogs north of the Accipiter Donga. The **RIVER ROCKS** female was seen in central Charleston on the 20th. She was seen again on the 23rd, mating with the N'weti male on the western bank of Charleston.
- On the 28th, the **NTSUMI FEMALE** was north of Baumont's Camp. She was south of Baumont's Camp on the 31st.
- On the 31st, a nervous **NO ID** young male was at the Old Flockfield Boma Crossing.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	33(9)
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CHEETAH

Cheetahs were seen on six days in July!

On the 5th, three males were around West Street.

A mother and her male cub took up residence on the Western Bank from the 14th- 19th. While rangers observed, the mother exhibited precision and speed by killing both an impala and a nyala.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	5
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

Cape hunting dogs were seen on **seven days**. Surprisingly, none of the sightings included a successful kill.

One of the more exciting sightings was on the 25th when a pack of six stole a new impala ewe kill from the Tshabalala male north of the Accipiter Donga. Four hyenas arrived within seconds of the Cape hunting dogs acquiring the kill and attempted to steal scraps.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED	31
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

This month we recorded **77 Cape buffalo** sightings and **158 elephant** sightings.

16 of the 77 buffalo sightings were of large herds. As we enter the last throws of winter, we will likely see more large herds of buffalo on MalaMala.

Other sightings of interest

A plethora of unique species was recorded in July. Here is a list of what was seen:

- Ostrich – one female ostrich, was in the area of the Old Airstrip on the 8th.
- Secretary bird – On the 10th, a secretary bird was around the Old Airstrip.
- Honey badger – five separate sightings were recorded of honey badgers this month.
- Cape clawless otter – two Cape clawless otters were in the Sand River, south of West Street, on the 16th.
- Side striped jackal – On the 17th, one side-striped jackal was around the Airstrip.
- Spotted hyena den – On the 23rd, we were delighted to discover a spotted hyena den site. For now, it appears three fluffy cubs call the termite mound on the MalaMala Flockfield Boundary home.