



Game Report



Impala and elephants in the Sand River, by Ranger Pieter van Wyk

MalaMala Game Reserve
December 2022

It's all about the wildlife!

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	38	30	Maximum	100	87
Minimum	16	22	Minimum	61	71
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
95		3.74		6	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	90
Leopard	107
Elephant	132
Buffalo	60
Cheetah	7
Cape Hunting Dog	13

**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	4 buffalo, 1 hyena, 1 impala, 1 nyala
Leopard	12 impala, 1 klipspringer, 1 warthog, 1 unknown
Cheetah	1 impala
Cape Hunting Dog	4 impala

**AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS*

LION PRIDES

THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 21

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

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

(33 sightings)

We continue to refer to this pride in sub-groups A-C, please see August 2022 report for the breakdown.

Kambula Group A was recorded three times this month. All four lionesses were at Marthly Crossing on the 11th. Just the two cubs were at the Broken Dam on the 12th. The final sighting of these four was on the 25th, when they were at the Parking Bay. We expect the mothers will come into oestrus soon, at which point the dynamics might shift to accommodate the protection of the cubs, while still mating.

Kambula Group B (four young males, and one sub-adult female), continue to move as a group of five. They were seen four times this month. The first time they were seen was at Manyelethi Crossing on the 12th. The group moved far north and were at 4-Ways Crossing on the 14th. They were north of Matshapiri Dam on the 15th.

Kambula Group C were recorded on 26 days this month. In 12 sightings, they were in the company of the Ndhzenga males. Three records were gleaned of females mating with these males. With this pride, it has become common to see lionesses alone, as well as in groups as large as eight individuals. Kapen Open Area, where the lioness gave birth at the end of last month, has remained zoned, as a result we will have to wait until January before we can give an update on the newest editions. It is worth noting that lionesses were seen in that area on the 12th, and 22nd, a good sign that they might still be keeping cubs in that area. The furthest south members of this group were seen was at Beaumont's Camp on the 10th, when four females were with two of the Ndhzenga males. The furthest north four members were Sand Pit Crossing on the 8th.

THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 1

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE

3 YEARS 9 MONTHS

MARTHLY

(3 sightings)

The Marthly lioness was enjoyed on three days this month. On Christmas Eve, she was north of the Airstrip. On Christmas Day, she was at Marthly Crossing. The last time she was seen for the year was on the 29th when she was at Elephant Rock Lookout.

THE NKUHUMA PRIDE = 18

1 ADULT FEMALE

9 YEARS 5 MONTHS

3 ADULT FEMALES

± 6 YEARS 6 MONTHS

4 SUB ADULT MALES

± 3 YEARS 6 MONTHS

2 SUB ADULT FEMALES

± 3 YEARS 6 MONTHS

1 SUB ADULT MALE

3 YEARS 0 MONTHS

7 CUBS

± 1 YEAR 8 MONTHS

WESTERN & CENTRAL EYREFIELD

(13 sightings)

In contrast to last month's five sightings, we enjoyed 13 sightings of members of this pride in December. With the presence of the new Black Dam males, and the dwindling of the Northern Avoca males, we are beginning to see more fragmentation of the sub-adults from this pride.

Sightings:

- On the 1st, all 18 members were with the remaining Northern Avoca male north of Mlowathi Dam.
- A lioness was at Matshapiri Dam on the 4th; just east of Matshapiri Dam, the other two mothers and the seven cubs rested.
- Two sub-adult males were at Mlowathi Pans on the 9th. They moved east and were in Wild Dog Rocks Open Area on the 10th.
- One adult female, two sub-adult females and four sub-adult males were at Matshapiri Dam on the 12th.
- The three females and seven cubs fed on a buffalo bull carcass around Stwise on the 15th.
- Two sub-adult males, and one sub-adult female were northeast of Mlowathi Dam on the 18th. The same group was north of Matshapiri Dam on the 22nd.
- Eight lions from this pride caused chaos at the hyena den north of the Sausage Spot on Boxing Day when they stole a hyena cub carcass that was killed by the hyenas.
- 10 members were east of Stwise on the 30th.
- One adult female, two sub-adult females and two sub-adult males had a buffalo kill north of the Sausage Spot on the 31st.

THE SAND RIVER PRIDE = 14

2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 5 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 5 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	2 YEARS 11 MONTHS
3 SUB ADULTS (1 FEMALE & 2 MALES)	2 YEARS 4 MONTHS
6 CUBS	1 YEAR 4 MONTHS
<i>SOUTHERN CHARLESTON</i>	
(1 sighting)	

MalaMala's most stable pride were only viewed on one day this month. The area of their territory is in the southern reaches of MalaMala, and with 90 other lion sightings recorded for the month, there was little urgency to make the expedition to find this pride. The presence of a new coalition of six males also appeared to keep members of this pride away from central and western Charleston for the first 10 days of the month. On the day they were seen, the 24th, they made it worthwhile by killing an impala ewe in the Sand River, at Ingwe Donga.

THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 20

7 ADULT FEMALES	UNKOWN AGES
6 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 11 MONTHS
7 CUBS	± 2 YEARS 4 MONTHS
<i>EASTERN EYREFIELD</i>	
(2 sightings)	

Four lionesses with eight cubs were seen on the 10th, southeast of Clarendon Dam. The second, and final time members of this pride were seen was on the 16th, when six members were north of Clarendon Dam.

MALE LIONS

THE NDHZENGA MALES = 4

2 ADULT MALES

± 7 YEARS 10 MONTHS

2 ADULT MALES

± 7 YEARS 5 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD & CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Kambula and Styx Prides.

First Encountered on MalaMala September 2020

(29 sightings)

This month, we recorded 10 more sightings of members of this coalition than we did last month. 12 of the 29 sightings were with lionesses from the Kambula pride. This month we saw two new coalitions on the outskirts of this coalition's territory, perhaps this coupled with some of the lionesses being in oestrus, is why we saw these males more in a more concentrated area, and more frequently this month.

Noteworthy sightings:

- Three males were with three females from the Kambula pride on the 2nd, south of Princess Alice Pans.
- One male mated with a lioness from the Kambula pride on the 8th, north of Princess Alice Pans. Another male was west of West Street Crossing at the same time.
- A mating pair was around Flockfield Tower on the 10th and 11th.
- A male was on the Causeway on the 12th.
- Two males were north of the Sausage Spot on the 15th.
- On the 16th, two males fed on the remains of a buffalo kill that the Nkhumu pride had killed west of Stwise.
- Three males were south of Jakkalsdraai Open Area on the 20th, while the fourth fed on the remains of a hyena carcass in the Ngoboswan Donga.
- All four males were with four lionesses from the Kambula pride around Kapen Open Area on the 22nd.
- Two males travelled north and were in Piccadilly Triangle on the 23rd.
- Two males were with a female in the Tamboti Thickets on the 28th.
- Two males fed on the remains of a nyala bull in the Tamboti Thickets on the 29th. A Kambula lioness was also present.
- In the last sighting for the year, two males were with one female in Kapen Open Area on the 30th.

THE NORTHERN AVOCA MALES = 1

1 ADULT MALES1

± 9 YEARS 6 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

Dominant over the Nkuhuma pride.

First encountered in late 2019.

(5 sightings)

Despite being without a coalition mate, sightings of this male were recorded on five days. He was with members of the Nkuhuma pride on the 1st, northeast of Mlowathi Dam. He was alone at Mlowathi Dam on the 7th. He was not seen on the 8th, but was found in the same area, around Mlowathi Dam, between the 9th and 11th. The Black Dam males created a presence in the northern parts of MalaMala later in the month, providing an adequate reason for why he was not seen again this month.

THE SOUTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES

± 9 YEARS 10 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Sand River Pride.

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve

(0 sightings)

We did not record sightings of these males on MalaMala this month.

Other Lions Encountered:

- Six male lions made their debut on MalaMala on the 4th. The **NKUHLU MALES**, rumoured to be a coalition of 9, hail from the Kruger National Park. They were seen on Charleston on the 4th and 5th, and then on Toulon on the 7th.
- Three unknown young males were seen on the 14th. Two were together north of the Nwana Nonashemeni Donga. The other attempted to hunt buffalo at Paraffin Drift.
- Three lionesses and five cubs from the **STYX PRIDE** were at Pole in the Road on the 17th. One female and one cub were at Trollip's Camp on the 22nd.
- The **BLACK DAM MALES** made their first appearance on MalaMala on the 19th, when they were west of Mlowathi Dam. On the 22nd, 23rd, and 25th, they were at Clarendon Dam. They were at the Old Borehole on the 30th and killed a buffalo bull in this area on the 31st.
- An NO ID female was at Buffalo Pans on the 28th, she was shy of vehicles.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED	84 (28 cubs)
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LEOPARDS

FEMALE LEOPARDS:

THE ISLAND FEMALE

9 YEARS 10 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Tamboti female, independent first quarter of 2015.

Mother of the Drum Crossing female.

(6 sightings)

The Island female was in the Matshapiri River, south of Emsagwen Waterhole on the 1st. On the 4th, she was mating with the Tshabalala male in Two-Toes Open Area. On the 8th, this female acquired an already diseased impala ewe in the reeds of the Sand River, at West Street Crossing. On the 9th, she hoisted the impala kill on eastern bank of the Sand River, the Accipiter male joined her that evening. On the morning of the 10th, the Maxim's male joined the Island female and Accipiter male, chasing both leopards away from what little remained of the carcass. The Tshabalala male also make a brief appearance but quickly retreated when he realised how much activity was around. The last sighting of this female was on the 13th when she was at Flockfield Camp.

THE DRUM CROSSING FEMALE

2 YEARS 4 MONTHS

SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Island female, independent February 2022.

(0 sightings)

The Drum Crossing female was not seen this month. This is normal for a young leopard who is finding her feet and exploring beyond her mother's territory.

THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE

6 YEARS 8 MONTHS

MALE CUB

1 YEAR 5 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Kikilezi female, orphaned on 22nd May 2017.

(14 sightings, 6 of female, 4 of female and cub, 4 of the cub)

We recorded sightings of this mother and son duo on 14 days this month. The first sighting of the month was on the 1st, when the female was at the old Kikilezihash Breakfast Spot. Mother and son killed an impala lamb on the 6th, but had it stolen by a spotted hyena when the cub dropped the carcass from a tree, north of West Street Bridge. The cub was alone, exploring his independence around Princess Alice Pans on the 7th and 9th. Mother and cub reunited at sunrise on the 10th, east of Princess Alice Pans. The cub was alone on the southern parts of the Airstrip on the 13th. Both leopards were seen on the 19th, however they were not together, the mother was north of Rattray's Camp, while the cub was west of West Street Bridge. The female was alone at Maxim's Lookout on the 24th. On the last day of the year, the two leopards shared an impala ewe kill, east of Princess Alice Pans.

THE NKOVENI FEMALE

10 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

*Daughter of the Mashaba female, independent early 2014.**Mother of the Plaque Rock female, Xinkhova female, and Stone Drift female.*

(13 sightings)

December brought a change in tides for this successful female. She started mating and was seen less with her two daughters.

Viewing of this female this month started well, she had an impala lamb kill around the southern parts of the Old Airstrip on the 1st. She had an impala ram hoisted in a large sausage tree around the Old Airstrip on the 3rd, she was joined here by the Maxim's male. On the 4th and 5th, the two leopards fed on the impala ram and mated frequently. This is the first record of this female mating since the birth of the Xinkhova and Stone Drift females 23 months ago. On the 6th and 7th, the Maxim's male dragged her further south, and they were seen mating around Confluence Crossing. She was the only leopard seen on the 12th, when she was in the Sand River, opposite MalaMala Camp. On the 29th, the Nkoveni female and the Stone Drift female were together with two hoisted impala lambs, north of Maxim's Lookout. With the potential for a new litter, it will be interesting to observe how long she will tolerate these visits from the Stone Drift female.

THE XINKHOVA FEMALE

1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

Daughter of the Nkoveni female, independent last quarter of 2022.

(1 sighting)

The only sighting of this newly independent female was on the 9th, when she was more than a kilometre east of the Ngoboswan Breakfast Spot. Her condition was good, but she was dragging her tail, suggesting that she had sustained an injury while exploring her newfound independence.

THE STONE DRIFT FEMALE

1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

Daughter of the Nkoveni female, semi-independent.

(5 sightings)

The Stone Drift female continues to spend time in the same areas as her mother. While her sister explores, she remains local. The first sighting of this female was on the 10th, when she had an impala lamb kill hoisted in a torchwood tree, north of the Airstrip. She was in the same spot on the 11th. On the 22nd, she was around the Quarry east of the Airstrip. She was north of the Airstrip again on Christmas Eve. Her and her mother both had impala lambs when they fed together north of Maxim's Lookout on the 29th.

THE PICCADILLY FEMALE

8 YEARS 11 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female, independent first quarter of 2016.**Mother of the Ngungwe female.*

(3 sightings)

This female had a rather unusual kill on the 18th, when she was found with the full carcass of a klipspringer at Mlowathi Koppies. On Christmas Day, the Piccadilly female was in the Mlowathi River, north of the Confluence with the Sand River. The next day, she was at Elephant Rock Lookout.

THE SIBUYE FEMALE

8 YEARS 11 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

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

(3 sightings)

We enjoyed three sightings of this female this month. She was at Mlowathi Pans on the 1st. She covered ground and was on Ostrich Koppies on the 2nd. She was north of the eastern koppie of Campbell Koppies on the 19th.

THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE

4 YEARS 11 MONTHS

CENTRAL & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Daughter of the Sibuye Female, independent second quarter 2019.

(6 sightings)

The Tlebe Rocks female was seen on six days this month. Of the six records, five were around Piccadilly Triangle. She was in this area on territorial patrol on the 1st, 8th, 10th, 11th. On the 22nd, she killed a warthog piglet east of Piccadilly Pans. The only time she was seen somewhat removed from Piccadilly Triangle was on the 27th, when she was southeast of Planks Pan.

THE LOOKOUT FEMALE

± 12 YEARS 11 MONTHS

CUB

8 MONTHS

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

*First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.**Mother of the Kapen female & the Redhawk male.*

(2 sighting, 0 of female, 2 of female and cub)

This mother and cub were seen on two days this month. On the 3rd and 4th, they were far north of where we expect to find them, in the vicinity of Buffalo Bush Dam. They had an impala lamb hoisted on the 3rd. On the 4th, guests watched as the mother killed a small nondescript mammal in the same area.

At eight months old, the cub is remarkably small for its age, and is still shy around vehicles.

THE PLAQUE ROCK FEMALE

4 YEARS 9 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA

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

(2 sightings)

We enjoyed two days of viewing this female. On the 8th, she moved through grass inflorescence at sunset, west of MalaMala Camp. On the 27th, she had an impala lamb hoisted south of the Broken Dam. While no cubs have been seen, she is still lactating.

MALE LEOPARDS

THE MAXIM'S MALE

± 8 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD & MALAMALA

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in early 2019.

(13 sightings)

Sightings of this impressive dominant male were recorded on thirteen days this month. In the first seven days he was seen every day; five of those days he was mating with the Nkoveni female. He was seen again on the 10th, when he pushed the Accipiter male and Island female off what little remained of an impala ewe, north of West Street Bridge. On the 15th, he was on the Old Airstrip. He was around West Street on the 18th. On the 20th, he was at the Causeway. The next time he was seen was at Buffalo Pans on the 24th. The last record we have for this male was on the 29th when he was at the Causeway.

THE NGOBOSWAN MALE

5 YEARS 1 MONTH

MARTHLY & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Son of the Emsagweni female, independent late 2019.

(3 sightings)

Sightings of this male have decreased in recent months. This month we only enjoyed sightings of this male on three days. He was at Mlowathi Koppies on the 17th. On the 19th, he was on the Causeway, perhaps this is why the Maxim's male was seen at the same place the following day. On the 28th, he was at Plank's Pan.

THE ACCIPITER MALE

± 12 YEARS 4 MONTHS

EASTERN & CENTRAL MALAMALA & FLOCKFIELD

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

(4 sightings)

Most of the sightings of this male concentrated around West Street Crossing this month. This is an interesting choice as the area is central in the Maxim's male's territory. On the 7th, he was in the Sand River around West Street Bridge. He stole an impala kill from the Island female north of West Street on the 9th. He remained at the kill on the 10th, until the Maxim's male chased him off.

THE SPLIT ROCK MALE

8 YEARS 5 MONTHS

CHARLESTON

*Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, independent latter half of 2015.
(1 sighting)*

The dominant male of the south only seen once in December, when he was at New Rocks on Christmas Eve. We suspect he is a new father as the Kapen female has a new litter of cubs south of Styx Crossing (see the section on other leopards for more).

THE FLAT ROCK MALE

9 YEARS 8 MONTHS

MARTHLY

*Son of the Porcupine female. First seen on MalaMala early 2017.
(5 sightings)*

The first sighting of this leopard for the month was on the 7th, when he was south of Marthly Crossing. He was at Lower Mlowathi Crossing on the 11th. He was east of Stwise on the 18th when he was on patrol. He was in the same area again on the 23rd. The last sighting of this male was on the 28th when he was at Mlowathi Koppies.

THE REDHAWK MALE

3 YEARS 3 MONTHS

NOMADIC (central MalaMala and central Flockfield)

*Son of the Lookout female, independent mid-2021.
(6 sightings)*

This young male is beginning to explore beyond his usual parameters. On the 1st he was east of Maurice's Pan. He was in Piccadilly Triangle on the 2nd and 6th. He was around the Ngoboswan Donga on the 8th and 9th. On the 10th he was at Maurice's Pan, with an impala lamb kill. He was not seen on MalaMala again this month, although reports and photographs suggest he was in the northern sector of the Sabi Sands towards the close of the year.

Other Leopards Encountered:

- The **TSHABALALA MALE** was mating with the Island female in 2-Toes Open Area on the 4th. He was northeast of Maurice's Pan on the 9th and at exit Lion Loop the following day and on the 25th. On the 27th he was east of White Cloth Open Area and the following day he was in Matshapiri Open Area.
- The **NTSUMI FEMALE** was south of Beaumont's Camp on the 4th. Both female and cub were on Skukuza road, west of Trollip's Camp on the 30th.
- The **KAPEN FEMALE** was at Styx Crossing on the 4th. She and two cubs (app. 2 weeks) were found at the rocks on Baby Elephant Walk on the 10th. These rocks make the perfect den site and hopefully the Kapen female's 2nd litter of cubs have better odds than her first. On the 19th she had an impala kill on the Charleston/Flockfield Boundary near Zebra Skull.
- An Unknown, slightly shy female was north of Wild Dog Rocks Open Area on the 4th.
- The **N'WETI MALE** and **RIVER ROCKS FEMALE** were south of Trollip's Camp on the 4th. The River Rocks female was at Verreaux's Crossing on the 21st.

- The **NGUNGWE FEMALE** was at Elephant Rock on the 5th and the 10th. The third sighting of this young female was on the 14th when she was near Paraffin Drift.
- The **XIVATI FEMALE** and her cub were seen in Toulon on the 7th.
- A female was seen briefly around the eastern parts of the Ngoboswan Donga on the 14th.
- The **FLOCKFIELD MALE** was north of Charleston Rocks on the 14th.
- The **YOUNG 2:3 MALE** was seen six times this month. Previously he was seen around New Rocks and in Eastern Flockfield. However, all six sightings of him this month were in the Tamboti Thickets.
- An unidentified male was northeast of West Street Bridge on the 20th.
- A female was seen at Hyena Waterhole on the 26th, however no ID was captured.
- A leopard was seen west of Campbell Koppies on the 30th. However, due to rain this was a long distance visual, and a sex and ID were unobtainable.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	32 (8 cubs)
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CHEETAH

This month our cheetah sightings were down from last month, but still up from previous months. We enjoyed seven sightings of the mother with the two cubs that we approximate to be seven months old. They were first found on the 17th, when they were southeast of the Borehole, for the following three sightings (19th, 20th, 21st) they remained in the area between Lion Rocks and the Borehole. On the 22nd, they were found at the 5-Star Junction. They were still around the 5-Star Junction on the 23rd, this time with the remains of an impala lamb kill. By Christmas Eve they had finished their kill and moved a substantial distance east, to the KNP Break. The last sighting of these three animals was on the 31st, when they had moved from the southeastern parts of MalaMala, into the northwestern corner, and were found in Mlowathi Open Area.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	3 (2 cubs)
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

We recorded 13 sightings of Cape hunting dogs on MalaMala this month. Four kills were recorded by these formidable predators.

The Toulon pack were seen three times this month. Their head count is sitting at 32 individuals. On the 4th, they had an impala carcass stolen by spotted hyena's, south of Beaumont's Camp. On the 5th, they killed an impala ewe east of Beaumont's Camp. The last record of them was on south-eastern Toulon on the 7th.

We recorded nine sightings of the pack of eight that we see most regularly. They continue to be seen in the central and northern parts of the property. The first of these sightings was on the 5th, when they were in Piccadilly Triangle. They killed an impala lamb on the 21st, north of the Sausage Spot. They were on the Causeway on the 29th, and east of Stwise on the 30th.

A pack of six, including two pups, were seen on the 27th, west of West Street. They killed an impala lamb.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED

46

CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

ELEPHANTS were recorded in **132 sightings** while we recorded **60 sightings of CAPE BUFFALO**. For the most part sightings of these two species were focused along the Sand River for the first half of the month. Once the rains came in the second half of December and the landscape had more water on offer, sightings were recorded further from the river. Elephants were seen swimming in the river after it rose almost in a show of delight. 25 sighting of buffalo herds ranging from 150 to 500 were recorded throughout the reserve. The bulk of these sightings were of a herd that spent the majority of its time in the eastern parts of the reserve from Clarendon south to the Windmill. The largest herd seen was 500 and this heard was in the south in the area of the Tjellahanga River. A smaller herd was in western Eyrefield along the Mlowathi River.

Other sightings of interest

The **HYENA DEN SITE** north of the Sausage Spot is still active. On the 26th a female killed one of the cubs at the den in behaviour known as infanticide. Infanticide accounts for 24% of hyena cub mortality and is believed to be part of a strategy females use to maintain their social hierarchy in the clan.

A **COLLARED PRANTINCOLE** was north of Clarendon Dam on the 4th.

A **WHITE-BACKED NIGHT HERON** was at the Causeway on the 4th.

Two **SIDE-STRIPPED JACKAL** dens were found this month. One den was in Wild Dog Rocks Open Area. Here the pair had five pups. The second den site was in an open area north of the Windmill, here the pair only had two pups.

A **SECRETARY BIRD** was seen around the Airstrip a few times.

Two **SOUTHERN AFRICAN PYTHON** sightings were recorded this month. Both of which were of large individuals and each with an impala lamb kill. The first was on the 10th, when a ±3m long individual had an impala lamb kill west of the Old Airstrip. The second was of a ±5m long individual had an impala lamb kill southeast of West Street bridge.

An **AFRICAN WILD CAT** was seen southwest of Matshapiri Dam on the 11th.

EUROPEAN ROLLERS made a return towards the end of the month.