



# Game Report



Photo by Ranger Reggi Barreto

MalaMala Game Reserve  
January 2021

*It's all about the wildlife!*

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	36	31	Maximum	97	88
Minimum	20	23	Minimum	68	73
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
207		8.15		8	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	53
Leopard	73
Elephant	146
Buffalo	36
Cheetah	1
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	1 impala, 1 waterbuck, 2 zebra
Leopard	8 impala, 1 steenbok, 1 wildebeest, 1 tree squirrel, 1 Egyptian goose
Cheetah	No recorded kills
Cape hunting dog	8 impala

*\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS*

### **LION PRIDES**

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#### **THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 19**

3 ADULT FEMALES	± 7 YEARS 10 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 7 YEARS 7 MONTHS
6 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 2 YEARS 5 MONTHS
5 SUB ADULT MALES	± 2 YEARS 5 MONTHS
2 CUBS	1 YEAR 8 MONTHS

*MALAMALA & FLOCKFIELD*

(24 sightings)

The Kambula pride remained fragmented this month with two main divisions. The bulk of the pride consisting of adult females, the 11 sub-adults and the two, year-and-a-half old cubs. The 'second division' consisting of the two lionesses who recently lost their cubs and the third lioness that occasionally links up with them. The last of the youngest cubs also disappeared during the early parts of the month, the last sighting of this cub was on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020. We can only assume it also succumbed to the mange infection this litter had contracted.

The entire pride was only seen together on two occasions this month. On the 13<sup>th</sup> the pride was at Mlowathi Koppies with both of the Gowrie males. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> they were on Lion Loop without the two males.

Seven of the other 22 sightings were of the bulk of the pride. They covered the pride's territory from Beaumont's camp in Charleston to Mlowathi Koppies in the north of their territory. Although these sightings involved the bulk of the lions, a few of the sub-adults were not present on occasions.

The remaining sightings were of two or three lionesses that have been spending more and more time away from the pride. These lionesses spent most of their time on the western bank around the Airstrip and Princess Alice Pans. These lionesses had initially split from the pride due to their young cubs but now, without the young cubs to care for, it's interesting that they have not joined back up with the pride. Could this be the start of a pride split? It is not common for prides of lions to number over a handful of adults. The Kambula pride currently numbers 19, which is well above the average size of prides in this area. Although there are six young males in the pride and will most certainly be pushed off in time, this would still leave 13 lionesses in a few years if all the sub-adults should make it through to adulthood. Therefore, it is no surprise that we are starting to see fragments in the pride.

Towards the later parts of the month, one of the sub-adult males from the pride was seen alone on three occasions and not looking in the best condition.

**THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 17**

7 ADULT FEMALES	UNKOWN AGES
6 ADULT FEMALES	± 5 YEARS 0 MONTHS
4 CUBS	± 5 MONTHS
<i>NORTH EASTERN EYREFIELD</i>	
(1 sighting)	

This month we mostly encountered the younger lionesses and their brother (the *Torchwood male*) as they looked to explore the northern parts of the reserve. We suspected a split was occurring then and they may have split but it's hard to know what the current dynamics are. The only confirmed sightings of this pride were two of the younger lionesses west of Matshapiri dam on the 8<sup>th</sup>. We reported on a lone lioness in the western parts of the reserve last month, and this month, we suspect a member of the Torchwood pride. However, we have been unable to confirm this.

**THE NKUHUMA PRIDE = 17**

1 ADULT FEMALE	± 8 YEARS 7 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 8 YEARS 1 MONTH
1 ADULT FEMALE	± 7 YEARS 10 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 8 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	± 4 YEARS 6 MONTHS
4 CUBS	± 1 YEAR 7 MONTHS
3 CUBS	1 YEAR 5 MONTHS
1 CUB	1 YEAR 1 MONTH
<i>NORTH WESTERN EYREFIELD</i>	
(1 sighting)	

It appears that the Nkuhuma pride may not be adopting a similar wet season distribution as last year with only one sighting of this pride recorded this month. This sighting was of one of the young lionesses on the 3<sup>rd</sup> when she was mating with a northern Avoca male north of Mlowathi Dam.

**THE STYX PRIDE = 6**

1 ADULT FEMALE	13 YEARS 0 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	10 YEARS 0 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	4 YEARS 1 MONTH
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 11 MONTHS
<i>WESTERN BANK OF CHARLESTON</i>	
(0 sightings)	

The Styx pride was not seen on MalaMala Game Reserve this month.

**THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 2**

1 ADULT FEMALE	7 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 CUB	1 YEAR 10 MONTHS
<i>MARTHLY</i>	
(3 sightings)	

The Marthly lioness is doing a superb job at raising her daughter. Both lionesses were seen together in all three sightings this month. Heavy rains meant that the Manyeleti River flowed consistently over the latter parts of the month, making much of their territory inaccessible to us. On the 1<sup>st</sup> the pride was north of Elephant Rock. It was two weeks before we saw them again and this time they were in one of their preferred spots in the Manyeleti River at Manyeleti crossing. The last sighting before the rains hit was on the 19<sup>th</sup> when they were south of Stwise.

**THE EYREFIELD PRIDE = 2**

1 ADULT FEMALE	13 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 CUB	1 YEAR 7 MONTHS
<i>SOUTH WESTERN CHARLESTON</i>	
(0 sightings)	

We recorded no sightings of this pride this month.

However, we received reports from within the Kruger National Park that the last surviving lioness has suffered an injury that will likely prove fatal. Her 18-month-old cub is too young to survive on its own. So, barring a miracle, the sun will soon set on a pride that's history on MalaMala is second only to the Styx pride. This pride has had an illustrious and long career on MalaMala starting way back in the early nineties. In the early parts of the 21st century, the pride numbered 19, with 6 young males (Mlowathi males / Mapogos) who would gain huge notoriety with their aggression and total dominance over the region. But like all mighty prides the dynamics shift and the same happened with the Eyrefield pride. Over the following years, their numbers dwindled to the aforementioned

mother and cub. This particular lioness will be remembered as the largest female in recent memory and one of the best buffalo hunters.

## MALE LIONS

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### THE GOWRIE MALES = 2

1 ADULT MALE ± 10 YEARS 1 MONTH

1 ADULT MALE ± 9 YEARS 1 MONTH

EYREFIELD, MALAMALA

*DOMINANT OVER THE KAMBULA AND MARTHLI PRIDES.*

*First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in September 2015.*

(14 sightings)

The two Gowrie males spent most of this month on the Sand River's western bank, a similar pattern to last month and a typical wet season distribution. The two males were seen together in five of the 14 sightings of them and in the company of members of the Kambula pride in eight of the 14 sightings. The first sighting for the year was of both males at Princess Alice pans on the 4<sup>th</sup>. On the 7<sup>th</sup> one of the males was at the same pans. Both males linked up and joined three lionesses from the Kambula pride on the Airstrip on the 12<sup>th</sup>. They moved north and were with the bulk of the pride at Mlowathi Koppies the following day. Overnight these lions moved south, covering approximately 9km and were at the Kapen breakfast spot the following day. On the 16<sup>th</sup> one of the males was with two lionesses from the Kambula pride on a zebra kill at West Street Pans. He was seen with the same lionesses south of the Airstrip on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. On the 21<sup>st</sup> one of the males was with Kambula lionesses on the Old Airstrip while his brother was at Styx crossing. The elder of the two brothers was south of the Ngoboswan donga on the 27<sup>th</sup>. On the 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> the younger male was on the Airstrip, with his brother and three lionesses joining him on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### THE 'NORTHERN' AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES ± 7 YEARS 7 MONTHS

NORTH WESTERN EYREFIELD

*DOMINANT OVER THE NKUHUMA PRIDE*

*First encountered in late 2019.*

(2 sightings)

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> one of the males was mating with a young lioness from the *Nkuhuma Pride* north of Mlowathi Dam. Both males were seen together on the Gowrie Boundary west of the Mlowathi River on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

### THE 'SOUTHERN' AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES

± 7 YEARS 11 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

DOMINANT OVER THE EYREFIELD PRIDE

(1 sighting)

These two males were seen on the 17<sup>th</sup> in F-Bend open area with the *Sand River Pride*.

### THE TORCHWOOD MALE = 1

1 ADULT MALE

± 5 YEARS 0 MONTHS

NOMADIC - EYREFIELD

(9 sightings)

Sightings of this male are getting more consistent. He is spending most of his time between Campbell Koppies and Jakkalsdraai open area. This male's first sighting was an interesting one where he was seen in the Sand River at the Old Dudley crossing with a lioness from the *Kambula pride* on the 7<sup>th</sup>. On the 15<sup>th</sup> he was east of Mamba waterhole, and from here he walked a large loop over the following five days. He first went north to Matshapiri Waterhole (16<sup>th</sup>), north to east of Fred's tree (17<sup>th</sup>), south to Matshapiri open area (18<sup>th</sup>) and then on the 20<sup>th</sup> he was northwest of Jakkalsdraai open area. Over a week went by with no sign before he was seen on the last three days of the month between Emsagwen and Matshapiri open areas.

### Other lions encountered:

- **Sand River Pride (3 adult females, 4 cubs)** – were in F-Bend open area with the two *Southern Avoca males* on the 17<sup>th</sup>.
- **Three male lions** were north of 4-Ways crossing on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- An unidentified **young lioness** (*Possibly a Torchwood lioness*) – was hunting impala in White Cloth open area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and caught an impala that the *Pungwe pack of Cape hunting dogs* were chasing in the open area south of the Ngoboswan Donga east of Terminalia road. She subsequently lost her kill to several hyena. This is the same female that was seen around Piccadilly Pans and White Cloth open area last month.
- A **male lion** was briefly seen on the 7<sup>th</sup>, southwest of Matshapiri Dam.
- The surviving **Clarendon Male** (16 YEARS 1 MONTH) was seen three times this month; in the Tamboti Thickets (26<sup>th</sup>), west of Campbell Koppies (30<sup>th</sup>) and on the Old Airstrip (31<sup>st</sup>).
- A **young male** was in the Tjellahanga River on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED	45 (20 cubs)
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## LEOPARDS

### FEMALE LEOPARDS:

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#### **THE NKOVENI FEMALE**

8 YEARS 5 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

*Daughter of the Mashaba female, independent early 2014.*

*Mother of the Plaque Rock female.*

(10 sightings)

Sightings of this female are up from last month with her spending more time in her 'usual' areas on the western bank of the Sand River. The first three sightings of this female were around the Airstrip on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. On the 9<sup>th</sup> she was seen briefly along Ambush Alley. The following day she was at the Booms. On the 15<sup>th</sup> she was at Maxim's Lookout. The following day she was found with an impala kill west of the Sand River north of the Old Wildebeest crossing. She didn't have the luxury of enjoying this kill for long as she was bullied off the kill the following day by the Maxim's male. From here she went north and was on the Causeway on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Ten days passed with no sign of this female, and thoughts where she'd have had her cub/s. On the 29<sup>th</sup> she was north of Maxim's Lookout, we suspected she had a kill but could not follow her into the area she went. The last sighting of the month was on the 30<sup>th</sup> at Maxim's Lookout again, and it looked as though she'd given birth. We'll have to wait for February to be sure though.

#### **THE PICCADILLY FEMALE**

7 YEARS 1 MONTH

##### **1 FEMALE CUB**

10 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female<sup>†</sup>, independent first quarter of 2016.*

(4 sightings; 2 of female, 2 of female and cub)

The Piccadilly female was only viewed on the first four days of the month. Cyclone Eloise meant that sightings later on in the month were scarce with the Manyeleti and Mlowathi Rivers coming down in flood, resulting in Marthly being inaccessible. On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Piccadilly female was without her cub at Kigelia crossing and then at Manyeleti crossing. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> mother and cub were at Manyeleti Crossing together and then at Matumi Rocks on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **THE EMSAGWENI FEMALE**

11 YEARS 1 MONTH

NORTH/EASTERN MALAMALA AND EYREFIELD

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female<sup>†</sup>, independent first quarter of 2012.*

*Mother of the Ngoboswan and Eyrefield males.*

(2 sightings)

During November and December of last year, we enjoyed regular sightings of this female around Campbell Koppies. This month sightings declined drastically. The first sighting of her was near Matshapiri Dam where we watched her catch a tree squirrel on the 1<sup>st</sup>. The second of the two sightings was on the 6<sup>th</sup> when she was back around Campbell Koppies.



**THE ISLAND FEMALE**

8 YEARS 1 MONTH

**1 FEMALE CUB**

6 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

*Daughter of the Tamboti female<sup>t</sup>, independent first quarter of 2015*

(16 sightings; 2 of female, 13 of female and cub, 1 of cub)

A similar trend to last month played out this month. The Island female and her cub spent most of their time in the Matshapiri River between the two prominent bends in the river north and south of Drum crossing. The first sighting of the month and the only sighting of the cub alone was on the 4<sup>th</sup> when she was west of White Cloth open area. The following day she'd been joined by her mother in the same area. A couple of days later the Island female had made an impala ram kill east of Matshapiri open area crossing and just after she'd led her cub to the kill a hyena ran in and stole the kill.

The remaining sightings of these two leopards were all-around Drum crossing between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 31<sup>st</sup>. The only exception to this was on the 16<sup>th</sup> when the Island female was on a territorial patrol around Maxim's Lookout. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, we watched as the Island female made an impala lamb kill. On the 19<sup>th</sup> the Island female and her cub spent some time on an impala ram kill with the Accipiter male. This was the first time we'd seen the male with the Island female's cub and with no aggression shown it is clear he is either the father or believes he is. On the 30<sup>th</sup> all three leopards were together once again, and this time they had an impala ewe and lamb kill. The Island female left her cub with the Accipiter male as she finished off a kill she had from the previous day. While she was gone, the cub was at no time in fear of the large male. Although we cannot be 100% sure that the Accipiter male is the father, all the evidence makes sense for him to be.

**THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE**

4 YEARS 10 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female<sup>t</sup>, orphaned on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017.*

(5 sightings)

The question of, when will the Three Rivers female have her first litter of cubs keeps being asked. At almost five years old it would be expected that she'd have had her first litter already. She's been seen mating on several occasions, but we've yet to see signs of her being pregnant. Could it be that she's had cubs and they haven't survived long during periods of few sightings of her, and subsequently we're unaware of these events? We'll have to wait and see what the year 2021 has in store for this much-adored female leopard.

The first sighting of the Three Rivers female was on the 8<sup>th</sup> at Elephant slide crossing. A couple of days later, she was at West Street Pans (10<sup>th</sup>). On the 13<sup>th</sup> she was around Princess Alice's Pans and judging from her body language there could well have been another leopard in the area. A week later she was at Flockfield Tower and the last sighting of her for the month was on the 31<sup>st</sup> west of the Parking Bay of the Airstrip.

**THE LOOKOUT FEMALE**

± 11 YEARS 0 MONTHS

**MALE CUB**

1 YEAR 5 MONTHS

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

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

(1 sighting; 1 sighting of cub)

The cub of the Lookout female was seen on Kapen Rocks by himself on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**THE KAPEN FEMALE**

3 YEARS 3 MONTHS

SOUTHERN FLOCKFIELD

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

(1 sighting)

The Kapen female was scent marking all along "the middle" from south of the Charleston/Flockfield boundary to the north of New Rocks on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Initially, the Kapen female was walking south before ascending a termite mound to scan her surroundings. After a few minutes of surveying the area, she descended the termite mound and walked back north. Was this the southern limit of her territory and was the River Rocks female nearby?

**THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE**

3 YEARS 0 MONTHS

CENTRAL &amp; WESTERN EYREFIELD

*Daughter of the Sibuye Female, independent second quarter 2019.*

(5 sightings)

The Tlebe Rocks female was seen five times this month. The first sighting of this young female was at Mlowathi Pans on the 6<sup>th</sup>. On the 15<sup>th</sup> she was at the Sausage Spot and from here she moved into the northern parts of her territory and was along Steenbok drive a couple of days later. The area around Mlowathi Pans is the core of her territory, and this is where she was found on the 18<sup>th</sup> and on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**THE SIBUYE FEMALE**

7 YEARS 1 MONTH

**1 MALE & 1 FEMALE CUB**

1 YEAR 5 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

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

(1 sighting; 1 of female and both cubs)

The Sibuye female and both her cubs were seen on the 13<sup>th</sup> north of Mlowathi Dam. With both her cubs approaching the year and a half age it won't be long before the two cubs reach independence. Typically, female cubs go independent at the year and a half age while male cubs get the luxury of six more months with their mother. It'll be interesting to see if both cubs stay with the Sibuye female for the same length of time.

**THE XIVINDZI FEMALE**

4 YEARS 1 MONTH

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

*Daughter of the Teardrop female, independent mid-2018.*

(0 sightings)

We did not record any sightings of the Xivindzi female this month.

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**MALE LEOPARDS**

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**THE ACCIPITER MALE**

± 10 YEARS 5 MONTHS

EASTERN &amp; CENTRAL MALAMALA &amp; FLOCKFIELD

*First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.*

(4 sightings)

Two of the four sightings of the Accipiter male this month were insightful in these solitary animals' lives and the dynamics of MalaMala leopards. On the 19<sup>th</sup> he shared an impala ram kill with the Island female and her cub on the western bank of the Matshapiri River north of Donald's crossing. Most textbooks state leopards are solitary and that males and females will only spend time when mating. The second and third sighting of this male was north of Maurice's pan where he had an impala kill on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. On the 30<sup>th</sup> the Accipiter male was again with the Island female and her cub with two impala kills. The Island female left the sighting to return to another kill of hers further south in the Matshapiri River. She went alone, leaving her six-month-old cub with the male. While away, the cub fed and played with an impala lamb kill while the Accipiter male fed on an adult female impala. Clearly, the Accipiter male is the father of the Island female's cub, or at least he thinks he is.

**THE MAXIM'S MALE**

± 6 YEARS 5 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD

*First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in early 2019.*

(4 sightings)

The Maxim's male was only seen four times this month. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Kudu's alarming calling at him gave him away to us as he was east of the Airstrip in a Tamboti thicket. The next day he was at West Street Pans. Almost two weeks went by before we saw him again. On the 17<sup>th</sup> he came across the Nkoveni female with an impala kill on the western bank of the Sand River north of the Old Wildebeest crossing. Being double the female's size, he bullied her off the kill and enjoyed an easy meal. The last sighting for the month was on the 28<sup>th</sup> when he was at West Street.

**THE EYREFIELD MALE**

3 YEARS 2 MONTHS

NOMADIC (southwestern Eyrefield and eastern Marthly)

Son of the Emsagweni female, *independent late 2019*.

(2 sightings)

There was a drastic decline in the Eyrefield male's sightings this month from 14 sightings in December 2020 to just the two this month. Both the sightings of this male were at Buffalo Bush dam on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Could his brother the Ngoboswan male have won the battle for the area around Campbell Koppies and Piccadilly pans pushing his brother back east?

**THE NGOBOSWAN MALE**

3 YEARS 2 MONTHS

NOMADIC (Marthly and western Eyrefield)

Son of the Emsagweni female, *independent late 2019*.

(5 sightings)

"Both the Ngoboswan and Eyrefield males are vying for the prime area around Campbell Koppies, and neither wants to back down. How much longer will they be 'tolerant' of one another?" – December 2020 Game Report. It's too early to say but has the Ngoboswan male come out on top of this battle between brothers? The Ngoboswan male was seen five times this month with four of the sightings being in the area of question whereas his brother was not seen near the area. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> the Ngoboswan male was east of Stwise. Several days later on the 12<sup>th</sup>, he was back at Stwise, this time with an impala kill. On the 21<sup>st</sup> he was strolling through Piccadilly pans when he had to quickly adjust his demeanour when the Kambula pride saw him and gave chase. He was quick to ascend a tree and get out of the rath of 15 lions. A week later he was some ways west of Mlowathi pans. The last sighting of the month of this male he was east of Fred's tree.

**THE SPLIT ROCK MALE**

6 YEARS 7 MONTHS

CHARLESTON

Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, *independent latter half of 2015*.

(1 sighting)

During the aftermath of cyclone Eloise, the Split Rock male was on the Charleston/Flockfield boundary at the Zebra Skull on the 26<sup>th</sup>. With the week before being one of torrential rain, this dominant male was out scent-marking the boundaries of his territory. When he was first found, he was walking with purpose and appeared he was 'out of breath' as he panted deeply.

### Other leopards encountered:

- **River Rocks female (3:3)** – North of Trollip's camp on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **Plaque Rock female (3:3)** – South of the Ngoboswan Donga (3<sup>rd</sup>), at Fred's Tree with an impala kill (5<sup>th</sup>), at the Kikilezihash breakfast spot (10<sup>th</sup>), east of the Old Airstrip (14<sup>th</sup>) and east of the Sand River in the Ngoboswan donga (24<sup>th</sup>).
- The **Inyathini male** was seen at Kapen open area on the 15<sup>th</sup> looking well-fed.
- The **Ntsumi female** was with both her cubs (2 months) with a wildebeest calf kill north of Beaumont's camp on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- The young **2:1 male** had a steenbok kill just east of Matshapiri open area crossing on the 8<sup>th</sup> and was in Matshapiri open area on the 16<sup>th</sup>.
- An unidentified male was north of Ostrich Koppies on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- An unidentified leopard was briefly seen in the Phragmites north of the Causeway on the 6<sup>th</sup>.
- An unknown male was at Paddy's Pools on the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- A female that we were unable to identify was at Rattray Stones on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Based on the area it's likely this was the Three Rivers female.
- An unidentified male was south of Campbell Koppies on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- An unknown female was on at the split rock on the 27<sup>th</sup>. This is possibly the nervous female that we've seen on several occasions around Clarendon and Matshapiri dam.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	<b>27 (6 cubs)</b>
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### CHEETAH

We only had **one sighting** of cheetah this month, and this was of three males at Clarendon on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Last month we had one sighting in eastern Flockfield, and we wrote about this being an area to go for cheetah. Similarly, Clarendon is one of the best areas on the reserve to find cheetah and therefore it's no coincidence that the first sighting for 2021 was there.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	<b>3</b>
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### CAPE HUNTING DOGS

Cape Hunting Dogs' sightings have remained consistent over the last few months and this month was no different with **13 sightings** of this cursorial predator. Again, the Pungwe pack accounted for the majority of sightings with ten. The remaining three sightings were of a pack of 13 that spent three days around the Airstrip before moving off. We watched this species made several impala kills this month with the Pungwe pack killing four impala lambs in a single hunt on the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED	<b>31</b>
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## CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

Despite water being readily available across the reserve and surrounding landscape, we enjoyed **146 sightings of elephants**, 118 were herds. Elephants were seen throughout the reserve but sightings concentrated around the Sand River.

**36 sightings of Cape buffalo** were recorded with only one sighting of a herd numbering around 200 in Clarendon open area on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The remaining 35 sightings were of bulls with a herd of 17 being seen. Most of these sightings were along the Mlowathi River where buffalo bulls enjoy the numerous wallows.

## OTHER SIGHTINGS OF INTEREST

A **serval** was seen in broad daylight near Gowrie circle on the 9<sup>th</sup>.  
A pair of **black-backed jackals** were in Piccadilly pans on the 24<sup>th</sup>.  
We enjoyed several sightings of **African civet** during the month.