



Game Report



A herd of Cape buffalo in the Manyeleti River by guest and photographer Gerald Hinde

MalaMala Game Reserve
October 2022

It's all about the wildlife!

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	39	31	Maximum	102	87
Minimum	17	20	Minimum	62.5	69
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
17		0.67		4	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	85
Leopard	105
Elephant	159
Buffalo	59
Cheetah	0
Cape Hunting Dog	11

**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	5 buffalo, 2 kudu, 2 impala
Leopard	5 impala, 2 scrub-hare, 1 duiker
Cheetah	No kills recorded
Cape Hunting Dog	2 impala, 1 nyala

*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS

LION PRIDES

THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 21

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

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

(41 sightings)

While the compositions of Groups B and C have shifted slightly this month, we will continue to refer to the fragments of this pride in Groups A – C (see August Game Report for the composition breakdown), denoting changes where applicable.

The most consistent of the three groups remains Group A. While their movements are erratic, the two lionesses and two female cubs are a stable unit. They were seen on five days this month. The first time they were seen was on the 2nd, when they were south of Matshapiri Open Area. On the 4th, they were at the Boom Hut. The final sighting was on the 31st, when they were northeast of Mlowathi Dam.

Individuals from Kambula Group B were seen on six days this month. The older of the young females from this sub-group was not with this group at all this month. It is likely she has linked up with Kambula Group C as she comes of mating age. Kambula Group B are moving haphazardly. They were recorded at Mlowathi Dam, Bicycle Crossing, the Old Airstrip, and in the Manyeleti River, where they had a buffalo kill on the 5th.

Kambula Group C (the lionesses not accounted for in groups A and B), spent the majority of their time with the Ndhzenga males, their noteworthy sightings are accounted for in the Ndhzenga males section of this report.

THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 1

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 7 MONTHS
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MARTHLY

(9 sightings)

The remaining Marthly lioness was seen on nine days this month.

This lioness was at Matumi Rocks on the 1st. She was at Bicycle Crossing on the 7th. By the 9th she had moved south and was around Wildebeest Loop. The furthest south she was recorded was on the 12th when she was south of Maurice's Pan. The remaining sightings of this lioness took place between the Causeway and Bicycle Crossing.

THE NKUHUMA PRIDE = 18

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

WESTERN & CENTRAL EYREFIELD

(7 sightings)

The full complement of this pride was seen for the first time on the 6th, when they shared the remains of a buffalo south of Ostrich Koppies. All lions were south of Ostrich Koppies again on the 7th. On the 8th, only the sub-adult's and one lioness were seen around the Sausage Spot. Two lionesses were southeast of Gowrie Circle on the 22nd. The last sighting of the month was four sub-adult males and three sub-adult females were at Bicycle Crossing on the 23rd.

THE SAND RIVER PRIDE = 14

2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 3 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 3 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	2 YEARS 9 MONTHS
3 SUB ADULTS (1 FEMALE & 2 MALES)	2 YEARS 2 MONTHS
6 CUBS	1 YEAR 2 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

(3 sightings)

Members of this pride were seen on three days this month. The first sighting was on the 18th, when all 14 lions fed on a buffalo carcass in northern Toulon. The full complement was seen on Toulon again on the 25th. Finally, this pride was north of Ivory Pan on the 27th.

THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 20

7 ADULT FEMALES	UNKOWN AGES
6 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 9 MONTHS
7 CUBS	± 2 YEARS 2 MONTHS

EASTERN EYREFIELD

(0 sightings)

We did not see members of this pride this month.

MALE LIONS

THE NDHZENGA MALES = 4

2 ADULT MALES ± 7 YEARS 8 MONTHS

2 ADULT MALES ± 7 YEARS 3 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD & CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Kambula and Styx Prides.

First Encountered on MalaMala September 2020

(33 sightings)

In 15 of the 33 sightings of these males, lionesses from the Kambula pride were present. Again, this month, records suggest that the male with the 'club footed' is fast becoming estranged.

Noteworthy sightings:

- On the 3rd, three males were with six lionesses from the Kambula pride north of the Windmill. The male with the 'club foot' was with one lioness at the 5-Star junction.
- On the 4th, the same three males and six lionesses were at the Windssock.
- The same group as above was south of Beaumont's Camp on the 5th, where they stole a kudu carcass from the Styx pride.
- Three males and seven Kambula lionesses killed a buffalo at the Windmill on the 11th.
- Three of the males were with lionesses south of West Street Crossing on the 22nd.
- The male with the 'club foot' was found roaring around West Street Crossing on the 25th.
- The three males and seven lionesses killed a buffalo in the rain on the 27th, at Old Trollip's Crossing. They fed on their kill the following day.

THE NORTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES ± 9 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

Dominant over the Nkuhuma pride.

First encountered in late 2019.

(0 sightings)

For the first time in more than a year neither of these two males was seen on MalaMala. Towards the end of the month, we received news that the frailer of the two males had died. With pressure mounting on the remaining male and the presence of the third male from this coalition been seen several times in recent months, it'll be interesting to see if these estranged brother link back up.

THE SOUTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES ± 9 YEARS 8 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Sand River Pride.

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve

(0 sightings)

The Southern Avoca males were not recorded on MalaMala in October.

Other Lions Encountered:

- They **STYX PRIDE** lost their kudu kill to the members of Kambula Group C and Ndhzenga males on the 5th, south of Beaumont's Camp. Three lionesses and six cubs were west of Trollip's Camp on the 8th.
- An **unidentified** lioness was at Wildebeest Crossing on the 30th.
- The **GOWRIE MALE** was alone at Elephant Rock on the 9th. He was with the **NKUHUMA YOUNG MALE** west of Emsagwen Waterhole on the 12th. The two lions were around Matshapiri Dam on the 15th with the Nkuhuma young male sporting a cut and bruised right eye, presumably caused by the Gowrie male while fighting over a kill.
- The third estranged **NORTHERN AVOCA MALE** was viewed twice this month with one of his sons from the Talamati Pride. This first sighting was near the hippo pools west of Bicycle Crossing on the 24th and the second sighting was at Mlowathi Dam on the 26th.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED

76 (21 cubs)

LEOPARDS

FEMALE LEOPARDS:

THE ISLAND FEMALE

9 YEARS 8 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

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

Mother of the Drum Crossing female.

(10 sightings)

The Island female is spending time in the western section of her territory. On six of the 10 days she was seen, she was west of the Sand River. The most east she was seen was on the 7th when she was around Buffalo Pans.

The most interesting sighting of this female was on the 2nd when she stole a kill from a Cape hunting dog. Shortly after she stole the impala, it was stolen from her by hyenas. Being an opportunistic creature, she found a gap and stole it back, hoisting it out of reach from the hyenas who lingered.

THE DRUM CROSSING FEMALE

2 YEARS 2 MONTHS

SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Island female, independent February 2022.

(9 sightings)

We enjoyed nine days of viewing this leopard this month. Sightings of this young female are of continued concentration around central MalaMala, between the Sand and Matshapiri Rivers. The furthest south she was recorded was on the 8th, when she was east of Flockfield Lookout. In five of the nine sightings, she was in the area of Maurice's Pan.

THE NKOVENI FEMALE

10 YEARS 2 MONTHS

2 FEMALE CUBS

1 YEAR 9 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

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

(34 sightings, 10 of female, 4 of female and cub/s, 20 of cub/s)

The Nkoveni female and her daughters continue to be seen around MalaMala Camp. This month saw a distinct decline in their activities as a trio. Both daughters are seen in overlapping areas within their mother's territory, this is expected to shift as they will inevitably grow less tolerant of each other. Furthermore, the female was seen exploring further east, perhaps in an effort to ascertain whether she could shift her territory as she creates space for her daughters.

A breakdown of the composition of the sightings of these three leopards:

- The female was recorded alone on 10 days.
- All three leopards were only seen together once.
- The female was with the 3:2 cub on three days.
- Both cubs were together without their mother on one occasion.
- The 3:2 cub was seen on her own on 10 days.
- The 2:2 cub was seen on her own on nine days.
- Excluding the one day where all three leopards were together, the 2:2 cub and the female were not recorded together.

Noteworthy sightings:

- The 3:2 cub caught a scrub hare on the 13th, at the Old Airstrip.
- The female was east of her usual range on the 23rd, when she was east of Piccadilly Triangle. She caught a scrub hare at dusk.
- The female and the 3:2 cub had an impala ewe west of the Causeway on the 25th. The 2:2 cub joined them on the 26th.

THE PICCADILLY FEMALE

8 YEARS 9 MONTHS

DAUGHTER

2 YEARS 7 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(7 sightings)

Sightings of this female remained consistent this month. Typical of late, the Piccadilly female, was far south of her territory on the 1st and 2nd, when she was with the Maxim's male at Elephant Slide Crossing. She was opposite MalaMala Camp on the 4th and 5th. She was west of Campbell Koppies on the 6th. On the 10th, she was in the heart of her territory, at Elephant Rock. She moved east and was north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing on the 11th.

**THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE
MALE CUB**

6 YEARS 6 MONTHS
1 YEAR 3 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female, orphaned on 22nd May 2017.
(6 sightings, 4 of female, 2 of female and cub, 0 of the cub)*

This mother and son duo was seen on four days this month. The most noteworthy of the six sightings was on the 19th, when the cub narrowly escaped death. While the two leopards were resting in the shade, a lioness ran in and attacked the cub. Something must have deterred the lioness because, after a brutal physical interaction, she let go and the cub was able to evade any further attacks. He has been seen since and is in good condition.

THE SIBUYE FEMALE

8 YEARS 9 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

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

The Sibuye female was at Mlowathi Pans on the 10th. She lingered in the area south of Mlowathi Dam on the 24th, while the Ngoboswan male fed on a hoisted impala ram carcass above her.

**THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE
MALE CUB**

4 YEARS 9 MONTHS
11 MONTHS

CENTRAL & WESTERN EYREFIELD

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

This female was seen twice this month, both times without her cub. She was at the Sausage Spot on the 5th. On the 7th, this female was in the company of the Ngoboswan male at the Mlowathi Spot. The cub hasn't been seen for a few months now and there is speculation amongst the rangers to whether he is still alive.

**THE LOOKOUT FEMALE
CUB**

± 12 YEARS 9 MONTHS
6 MONTHS

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

*First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.
Mother of the Kapen female & the Redhawk male.
(1 sighting, 0 of female, 1 of female and cub)*

Astonishingly, the cub of the Lookout female was seen with its mother on the 20th. The female led her cub to a duiker kill in the Tamboti Thickets. Having not seen the cub for some time, it is a relief to know it is still around.

THE PLAQUE ROCK FEMALE

4 YEARS 7 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA

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

(4 sightings)

We recorded the Plaque Rock female on four days this month. On the 14th, she was around the Broken Dam. She was around the Broken Dam again on the 24th and 25th, where she had hoisted an impala carcass in a dead leadwood tree. On the 26th, she flaunted her elegance as she posed on a boulder at Marthly Crossing.

MALE LEOPARDS

THE MAXIM'S MALE

± 8 YEARS 2 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD & MALAMALA

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in early 2019.

(15 sightings)

While less mating activity was reported from this male this month, he continues to be the most frequently seen dominant male on MalaMala. The majority of the sightings of this male occurred around West Street Bridge. On the 1st and 2nd he mated with the Piccadilly female around Rattray's Camp, he was alone in all of the sightings that followed.

THE NGOBOSWAN MALE

4 YEARS 11 MONTHS

MARTHLY & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Son of the Emsagweni female', independent late 2019.

(3 sightings)

The Ngoboswan male was only seen on three days this month. Reports from properties to our north suggest that he is challenging the dominant males in that area. He was with the Tlebe Rocks female on the 7th at the Mlowathi Spot. 10 days later, he was at Mlowathi Pans. The last time he was seen was on the 24th, when he guarded an impala ram carcass from the Sibuye female, south of Mlowathi Dam.

THE ACCIPITER MALE

± 12 YEARS 2 MONTHS

EASTERN & CENTRAL MALAMALA & FLOCKFIELD

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

(1 sighting)

The only sighting of this male was on the 6th, when he was east of the White Cloth.

THE EYREFIELD MALE

4 YEARS 11 MONTHS

NOMADIC (Eastern Eyrefield and eastern MalaMala)

Son of the Emsagweni female', independent late 2019.

(0 sightings)

No sightings were recorded of this male.

THE SPLIT ROCK MALE

9 YEARS 0 MONTHS

CHARLESTON

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

(1 sighting)

The Split Rock male was only seen once this month. This time he was recorded in the Tamboti Thickets, significantly further north than we expect to see him.

Other Leopards Encountered:

- The **FLOCKFIELD MALE** was on the Charleston/Flockfield Boundary near the KNP break on the 1st.
- The **REDHAWK MALE** was near White Cloth Open Area on the 3rd and northeast of West Street Bridge on the 10th. On the 12th he was at Matshapiri Open Area Crossing.
- The two cubs of the **TENGILE FEMALE** were at KK Pans on the 5th. The female cub was in the Sand River west of KK Crossing on the 10th while her mother was at KK Pans.
- The **NTSUMI FEMALE** was seen on the western bank of Charleston on the 8th. On the 27th she was walking south from Beaumont's Camp.
- The **TSABALALA MALE** was at Emsagwen Crossing on the 9th.
- The **FLAT ROCK MALE** was north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing on the 10th, near Bicycle Crossing on the 12th. On the 15th he was at Elephant Rock. He was west of Kigelia Crossing on the 17th. On the 20th he was north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing.
- The **RIVER ROCKS FEMALE** had remains of a duiker kill southeast of the Confluence of the Sand River and the Rock Drift Donga on the 18th. On the 23rd she was on the Sand Rivers Eastern bank south of the Rock Drift Donga.
- The **XAXA MALE** was at Mlowathi Dam on the 21st.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	27 (6 cubs)
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CHEETAH

This month no cheetahs were recorded on the property.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	0
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

Sightings of **Cape hunting dogs** were enjoyed on **11 days** this month. On the 22nd, a pack of eight killed an impala and a nyala around Stone Drift. The same group killed a pregnant impala ewe south of the Causeway on the 29th.

The Toulon pack were seen frequently in the south, and with their numbers totalling 41, they have become quite the spectacle.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED	49 (21 Pups)
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

This month, **159 elephant** sightings were recorded. 145 of these sightings were of herds, while the remaining 14 were of bulls.

For a change, we enjoyed more sightings of large herds of buffalo than bulls this month. 33 of the **59 buffalo sightings** were of breeding herds.

Other sightings of interest

The **HYENA DEN SITE** north of the Sausage Spot continues to house cubs. Four young cubs have been seen at this den.

The **HYENA DEN SITE** on the MalaMala/Flockfield Boundary is also active, but sightings of young at this den have decreased since last month.