



# Game Report



A buffalo bull from a herd in Eastern Flockfield by Gareth Nuttall-Smith

MalaMala Game Reserve  
May 2023

*It's all about the wildlife!*

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	32	26	Maximum	90	79
Minimum	12	17	Minimum	54	63
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
34		1.3		1	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	123
Leopard	123
Elephant	111
Buffalo	54
Cheetah	4
Cape Hunting Dog	6

*\*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	6 impala, 1 waterbuck, 1 buffalo, 1 giraffe
Leopard	12 impala, 2 duiker, 1 scrub hare, 2 unknown
Cheetah	No recorded kills.
Cape Hunting Dog	2 impala, 1 nyala, 1 unknown

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS

## LION PRIDES

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### THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 29

2 ADULT FEMALES	± 10 YEARS 2 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 11 MONTHS
5 YOUNG ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 10 MONTHS
5 YOUNG ADULT MALES	± 4 YEARS 9 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	4 YEARS 0 MONTHS
1 ADULT MALE	4 YEARS 0 MONTHS
11 CUBS	± 5 MONTHS
3 CUBS	3 MONTHS

*MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON*  
(61 sightings)

We enjoyed 61 sightings of this pride this month. The lionesses continue to keep their cubs on the Western Bank, with all the sightings of the cubs being in this stretch of the property. Infighting amongst the pride and between lionesses and the Ndhzenga males was at an all-time high this month with several sightings of these lions fighting, the most noteworthy one being on the Airstrip at sunrise on the 11<sup>th</sup>. One lioness was a bit too rough with a cub and the other four lionesses laid into her with two of the Ndhzenga males roaring amongst them. After almost two years the lioness with the two cubs of the Gowrie Males has lost the fight to keep them safe. The first cub disappeared a few months ago and we received reports this month that the Ndhzenga males caught up with the second cub this month.

### Noteworthy sightings:

- Three lionesses and eight cubs shared an impala ram carcass with the Ndhzenga males north of Princess Alice Pans on the 1<sup>st</sup>.
- From the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> the lionesses kept the cubs around Princess Alice Pans. One lioness with two cubs kept her cubs more secluded but was seen introducing them to the rest of the litters at various points.
- On the 9<sup>th</sup>, one lioness with three very young cubs were south of West Street, she was seen in this area in the days that followed.
- On the 10<sup>th</sup>, a lioness killed an impala ewe at West Street Crossing.
- On the 11<sup>th</sup>, five lionesses, seven cubs and three Ndhzenga males were on the southern parts of the Airstrip. It is unclear what prompted it, but a fight broke out between the lions. None of the lions sustained any substantial injuries.
- Four lionesses and seven cubs fed on a male waterbuck kill at the old Kikilezihash Breakfast Spot on the 17<sup>th</sup>.
- One lioness enjoyed the company of the Black Dam males between the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> and was seen mating with them over the course of this time. She was with them again on the 27<sup>th</sup>.
- A lioness attempted to steal a hoisted impala ram carcass from a Tamboti tree on the 28<sup>th</sup>, east of Piccadilly Triangle. She was outwitted, and the Flat Rock male returned to the carcass the next morning.

**THE NKUHUMA PRIDE = 18**

1 ADULT FEMALE	9 YEARS 10 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 9 MONTHS
4 SUB ADULT MALES	± 3 YEARS 11 MONTHS
2 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 3 YEARS 11 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	3 YEARS 5 MONTHS
7 SUB ADULTS	± 2 YEARS 1 MONTH

*WESTERN & CENTRAL EYREFIELD*

(9 sightings)

We had an increase in sightings of lions from this pride this month. A lioness from this pride mated with the Black Dam males west of the Old Borehole on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, a Kambula lioness came to investigate the situation, trying to entice the males to mate with her instead. We saw three females (two sub-adult) and one sub-adult male north of Mlowathi Dam on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> were great days for viewing this pride as thirteen lions where south of Ostrich Koppies. The last time members of this pride were seen was on the 29<sup>th</sup>, when two sub-adult males were following a herd of buffalo west of Clarendon Dam, their nerves got the better of them and they never made any attempt to hunt.

**THE SAND RIVER PRIDE = 16**

2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 10 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 10 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 4 MONTHS
3 SUB ADULTS (1 FEMALE & 2 MALES)	2 YEARS 9 MONTHS
6 CUBS	1 YEAR 9 MONTHS
2 CUBS	5 MONTHS

*SOUTHERN CHARLESTON*

(2 sightings)

Two separate sightings of members of this pride were had on the last day of the month. One lioness with one small cub were south of Charleston Rock, while two lionesses from this pride were south of Trollip's Camp. With the arrival of the Nkuhlu males in the southern parts of the area this pride has been splintered up with reports of the fractured pride all over Toulon and southern Charleston. The Nkuhlu males have also killed a few lions with their arrival. However, at this stage it is still unclear if these were from the Sand River Pride or the Styx Pride.

**THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 1**

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	4 YEARS 2 MONTHS
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*MARTHLY*

(1 sightings)

The Marthly lioness has kept a low profile this month and was only seen once resting in the Manyeleti River at Kigelia Crossing on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

**THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 20**

7 ADULT FEMALES

6 ADULT FEMALES

7 SUB ADULTS

*EASTERN EYREFIELD*

(1 sighting)

UNKOWN AGES

± 7 YEARS 4 MONTHS

± 2 YEARS 9 MONTHS

Four females and seven cubs from this pride and two of the males from the Kruger moved south from Clarendon (30 April) to Fourways open area on the 1<sup>st</sup>. This was the last confirmed sighting of these lions. However, two other groupings of lions were viewed in eastern MalaMala and Flockfield later in the month that we were unable to identify with certainty. There is always the possibility these lions could be from this pride, but the compositions don't match what we have come accustomed to seeing. See the **OTHER LIONS** section for details on these sightings.

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**MALE LIONS**

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**THE NDHZENGA MALES = 2**

1 ADULT MALE

± 8 YEARS 3 MONTHS

1 ADULT MALE

± 7 YEARS 10 MONTHS

*WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD & CHARLESTON**Dominant over the Kambula and Styx Prides.**First Encountered on MalaMala September 2020*

(25 sightings)

We recorded a stable 25 sightings of this coalition this month. For the first week, all three males were seen on most days, keeping the company of the Kambula lionesses and cubs mostly around Princess Alice Pans. The most noteworthy event this month was the passing of the male with the abdominal protrusion. As the coalition is whittled down, it will be increasingly more difficult for the remain males to hold their dominance.

**Noteworthy sightings:**

- On the 11<sup>th</sup>, the three males were involved in a fight that broke out on the southern end of the Airstrip. The Kambula lionesses participated in the brawl.
- Tensions subsided and all three males were with lionesses and cubs at Princess Alice Pans on the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- On the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, the male with the abdominal protrusion defended an impala ram carcass from a young lioness of the Kambula pride at Princess Alice Pans. Rangers noted that his condition had deteriorated.
- On the 25<sup>th</sup>, the male with the abdominal protrusion had another impala carcass at Princess Alice Pans in the early afternoon. An hour later, his lifeless body was found in the same area.
- On the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> the remaining members of this coalition were around West Stret Pans roaring.

**THE NORTHERN AVOCA MALE = 1**

1 ADULT MALE

± 9 YEARS 11 MONTHS

*WESTERN EYREFIELD*

*Dominant over the Nkuhuma pride.*

*First encountered in late 2019.*

(0 sightings)

The last Northern Avoca male was not seen this month.

**THE SOUTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2**

2 ADULT MALES

± 10 YEARS 3 MONTHS

*SOUTHERN CHARLESTON*

*Dominant over the Sand River Pride.*

*First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve*

(0 sighting)

No Sightings of these two males were recorded.

**OTHER LIONS ENCOUNTERED:**

The **BLACK DAM MALES** (2 Adult males – 5 YEARS 8 MONTHS) - 12 sightings

The Black Dam males have been spending a fair amount of time in the northern parts of MalaMala and have often been seen around the Molwathi river mating with one of the Kambula lionesses.

**PRIDE** - 2 adult lionesses and three male cubs (± 1 YEAR 6 MONTHS)

A small pride of lions comprising of two adult lionesses, one older lioness and one younger and three young males from two litters around 18 months old appeared around Paddy's Pools this month. On the 9<sup>th</sup> they were west of Paddy's Pools where they chased the Ottawa pack of Cape hunting dogs that walked into them unexpectedly. The Island female was also in the area and its unknown whether the lions had treed her, and she took the gap when the lions were occupied in chasing the Cape hunting dogs. The second sighting of these lions was on the 19<sup>th</sup> when they were south of Paddy's Pools. Although we only recorded two sightings of this pride it is more than likely they spent more time in this area after an influx of prey species into this area after a green flush of grass after burning in this area. Initially it was thought this was the Fourways pride. However, these lions were very relaxed with our presence and the Fourways Pride is understandably weary at first.

**PRIDE** – 4 adult females and four cubs (± 5 MONTHS)

This pride was found on a giraffe kill south of the Kapen River west of the KNP break on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The pride had come from Paddy's Pools, and they had been joined by a male. The lions fed on the giraffe until the 28<sup>th</sup>. At first it was thought these were the lions that had been seen around Paddy's Pools

previously. However, they were weary of our presence, the three young males were not present and after better views of the lionesses they were not the same lions. The weary behaviour of these lions is more in line with what we are used to with the Fourways pride.

It'll be interesting to see if we get more sightings of either of these lions as we try to figure out their stories.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED	58 (27cubs)
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### LEOPARDS

#### FEMALE LEOPARDS:

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##### **THE ISLAND FEMALE**

10 YEARS 3 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

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

*Mother of the Drum Crossing female.*

(8 sightings)

The Island female has been seen across the entire width of her territory, but perhaps the most notable sighting occurred on the 13<sup>th</sup> of the month when she ventured further south towards the Kapen River and happened upon the Kapen female and her two cubs. She fatally injured the male cub during the interaction. With no noticeable pressure to her north, it's a mystery to us why her movement so far south. She's covering large distance with sightings of her being at Styx Crossing, Paddy's Pools and the Ngoboswan breakfast spot in a week. Is there an unknown pressure on this female causing her to venture wider or does she have a lack of pressure and is able to spread out?

##### **THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE**

6 YEARS 10 MONTHS

##### **MALE CUB**

1 YEAR 10 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

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

(7 sightings, 7 of female, 0 of female and cub, 0 of the cub)

May has proven to be a busy month for the Three Rivers female. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, she was seen disappearing into some dense vegetation in Rattray's Camp, it was clear that she had cubs as they were audible, yet the cubs were not seen until about a week later when the Three Rivers female was seen carrying the dead body of a cub. In a strange sighting, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, this female partially fed on her cub's carcass. After this setback, she moved along the western bank of the Sand River and was seen mating with the Maxims male on the 24<sup>th</sup>, north of Maxim's Lookout.

**THE DRUM CROSSING FEMALE**

2 YEARS 9 MONTHS

SOUTHERN MALAMALA

*Daughter of the Island female, independent February 2022.*

(0 sightings)

No sightings were recorded of this female this month.

**THE NKOVENI FEMALE**

10 YEARS 9 MONTHS

**2 CUBS**

3 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA &amp; SOUTHERN MARTHLY

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

(15 sightings, 9 of the female, 6 of the female and cubs)

The Nkoveni female has spent much time just south of Sable Camp along the Sand River's western bank. She was viewed on multiple occasions feeding on impala ram carcasses and has been living up to her reputation as a good mother. Her two cubs have been kept rather well hidden between the Sand River and the Airstrip, and despite many lion sightings in this area, she continues to keep her cubs safe.

**Noteworthy sightings:**

- On the 9<sup>th</sup>, she was found with two impala ram carcasses south of Sable Camp.
- On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, she led her young cubs to an impala kill south of Sandpit Crossing. The mother and both cubs remained in this area for another two days.
- The female led rangers to her white berry bush den on Sandpit Drive on the 28<sup>th</sup>.
- On the 30<sup>th</sup>, she moved her cubs to a new den, east of the Windsock.

**THE XINKHOVA FEMALE**

2 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA &amp; SOUTHERN MARTHLY

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

(14 sightings)

The Xinkhova female has spent much time on the western bank of the Sand River in her mother's territory, and as the Nkoveni female has new cubs, she has not taken kindly to this. The two had an altercation east of the Airstrip when the Nkoveni female stole an impala kill from the Xinkhova female.

**Noteworthy sightings:**

- On the 1<sup>st</sup>, she had an impala hoisted north of the Quarry at the Windsock.
- She explored Piccadilly Triangle on the 7<sup>th</sup>.
- She had a hostile interaction with her mother on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when both leopards were on the Old Airstrip at dawn. They had another altercation a few days later, north of the Windsock.
- On the 27<sup>th</sup>, the Xinkhova female attempted to hunt a monitor lizard in the Sand River south of the Causeway, but she was interrupted by a large crocodile who was too interested in her activities for her liking.



**THE STONE DRIFT FEMALE**

2 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA &amp; SOUTHERN MARTHLY

*Daughter of the Nkoveni female, semi-independent.*

(9 sightings)

The Stone Drift female has been moving along both banks of the Sand River between the Causeway and West Street Bridge. She successfully killed a young duiker, but had it stolen by the Flat Rock male on the 17<sup>th</sup>, east of the Causeway. The last time she was seen was on the 24<sup>th</sup> when she was at West Street Bridge.

**THE PICCADILLY FEMALE**

9 YEARS 4 MONTHS

**1 MALE CUB**

0 YEARS 4 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(15 sightings, 5 of female, 10 of female and cubs, 0 of the cubs)

The Piccadilly female and her cub have been spending a lot of time around Stwise and the Manyeleti River, yet they have moved as far southeast as Mlowathi Koppies. The Piccadilly female has also had several encounters with the Tlebe Rocks female. On the 4<sup>th</sup>, the Tlebe Rocks female was dragged into the Piccadilly female's territory while in courtship with the Flat Rock male. The Piccadilly female did not take kindly to this female so close to her cub and chased her. On the 12<sup>th</sup>, the Piccadilly Female, cub, Tlebe Rocks female and Flat Rock male all hovered around two impala ram carcasses that were north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing. The mother and cub were seen feeding on the remains of a small antelope from the 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> atop Mlowathi Koppies.

**THE SIBUYE FEMALE**

9 YEARS 4 MONTHS

**2 CUBS**

1 MONTH

WESTERN EYREFIELD

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

(3 sighting, 1 of female and cubs, 2 of the cubs)

Twice in the first week of the month, two cubs were found perched on Tlebe Rocks. The cubs were left alone, young and with no sign of the female. Finally, on the last day of the month, the female, two cubs and the Ngoboswan male were all together west of Mlowathi Dam, there was a duiker carcass present, but the Ngoboswan male made no effort to share the food with his presumed offspring.

**THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE**

5 YEARS 4 MONTHS

CENTRAL &amp; WESTERN EYREFIELD

Daughter of the Sibuye Female, independent second quarter 2019.

(7 sightings)

The Tlebe Rocks female has been seen in the areas north of Campbell Koppies, towards Stwise and further west towards the Mlowathi River, her movements driven by her search for the Flat Rock male, with whom she was seen mating on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, she spectacularly killed an impala ram who was distracted by fighting activities. She lost the kill to a spotted hyena shortly after making the kill but managed to steal a portion back later in the day.

**THE LOOKOUT FEMALE**

± 13 YEARS 4 MONTHS

**1 CUB**

1 YEAR 1 MONTH

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

*Mother of the Kapen female & the Redhawk male.*

(0 sightings)

We did not see the Lookout female in May.

**THE PLAQUE ROCK FEMALE**

5 YEARS 2 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA

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

(2 sightings)

The Plaque Rock female has been bold and ventured into her mother's territory, where she was not welcome. On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the Plaque Rock female and the Nkoveni female had an altercation on the Old Airstrip. The Stone Drift female, Maxim's male, and Xinkhova female were also in the area.

## MALE LEOPARDS

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### **THE MAXIM'S MALE**

± 8 YEARS 9 MONTHS

*WESTERN FLOCKFIELD & MALAMALA*

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

(5 sightings)

As usual, the Maxims male continues to be sought after by the female leopards around his territory and was seen mating with the Three Rivers female on the 24<sup>th</sup>. However, he didn't take kindly to the Island female who he chased aggressively when met with her advances on the 8<sup>th</sup>, at Maurice's Pan. He was also seen seeking out the Kangela male on the 30<sup>th</sup> who was found feeding on an impala ram in the central parts of his territory. Luckily for the younger male, the Maxim's male did not find him.

### **THE FLAT ROCK MALE**

10 YEARS 1 MONTH

*MARTHLY*

*Son of the Porcupine female. First seen on MalaMala in early 2017.*

(9 sightings)

The Flat Rock male has been viewed throughout Marthly and further south into areas we have not seen him for years. With an absence of the Ngoboswan male opposite MalaMala camp in recent time the Flat Rock male appears to have pushed the younger male further east and has taken over control of Piccadilly Pans and the surrounding areas. Although he was most often seen around the open area east of the Causeway, it was here where he encountered the Stone Drift female and stole her duiker kill. (Refer to the above section on the Stone Drift female for details of the above event).

#### **Noteworthy sightings:**

- On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Flat Rock male mated with the Tlebe Rocks female north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing.
- On the 6<sup>th</sup>, the Flat Rock male chased the Tlebe Rocks female up a tree as she followed him into the heart of the Piccadilly female's territory.

### **THE NGOBOSWAN MALE**

5 YEARS 6 MONTHS

*MARTHLY & WESTERN EYREFIELD*

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

(3 sightings)

The Ngoboswan male has continued to patrol his extensive territory and was seen with the Sibuye female and her two cubs, who were feeding on a duiker kill in a drainage line southwest of Mlowathi Dam.

## THE SPLIT ROCK MALE

8 YEARS 10 MONTHS

### CHARLESTON

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

(2 sightings)

The Split Rock male has been seen a significant distance north of his known territory and seems to be exploring the territory of the Accipiter male since his disappearance over the past months. He was first seen east of the Kapen River on the 5<sup>th</sup>, near where the Kapen female had her cubs. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, the Split Rock male had an impala lamb kill hoisted around exit Flockfield Lookout.

### Other Leopards Encountered:

- **KANGELA MALE** (4 sightings) – the nomadic Kangela male was found walking past the MalaMala Camp reception on the 26<sup>th</sup>. He was east of MalaMala Camp the next day. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, he was northwest of West Street Bridge with the remains of an impala carcass. He wisely made his way quickly across the Sand River moments before the arrival of the much larger and territorial Maxims male.
- **RIVER ROCKS FEMALE** (5 sightings)- This leopard was seen with her two cubs south of the Rock Drift Donga on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The female was alone on the 13<sup>th</sup> when she was south of Charleston North Crossing. She was seen at the den site again on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> with both cubs. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, a large herd of buffalo visited the female and cubs, who took refuge in a rocky outcrop adjoined to the den.
- **KAPEN FEMALE** (10 sightings) – the Kapen female is becoming a feature around Styx Crossing. She was in this area consistently until the 13<sup>th</sup>, when the Island female killed her male cub. After this event, she moved the surviving cub south and was seen around Lion Rocks and into the northern parts of Charleston.
- **EYREFIELD MALE** (1 sighting) – this male was seen lounging in marula tree south of Matshapiri Dam on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- An **unknown female** was seen in the eastern parts of Charleston on the 31<sup>st</sup>. She was shy and was missing her left eye.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	27 (9 cubs)
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## **CHEETAH**

In May we recorded **four sightings** of cheetah on MalaMala. The first three sightings were of the young male that we have seen regularly on the Western bank of the Sand River near the Airstrip. This month was no different and we viewed him first at Flockfield Tower on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the following day at West Street Pans. On the 20<sup>th</sup> he was chased south off the Airstrip by a Ndhzenga male.

The fourth sighting was of a young male north of Campbell Koppies on the 28<sup>th</sup>. However, we could not confirm if this was the same young male.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	>1
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## **CAPE HUNTING DOGS**

**Three packs** of Cape Hunting Dogs were observed in May in only **six sightings**.

The pack of six seen occasionally in the northern parts of the reserve was seen once on the 19<sup>th</sup> when they had an impala ram kill at Senegal Bush.

The pack of seven known as the Ottawa pack was viewed in three sightings. The first was at Paddy's Pools on the 9<sup>th</sup> when they came jogging into the sighting of the two lionesses and three young males who preceded to chase the pack west. The second sighting was on the 25<sup>th</sup> when the pack killed two impalas near Piccadilly Pans. The following day the Pack was south of Sable Camp and while following them we witnessed them catching a young nyala at the Boom Hut.

The Toulon pack of 30 were viewed twice in central Flockfield on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. On the 30<sup>th</sup> they had a kill north of New Rocks.

As the dry season starts to set in, we are expecting Cape Hunting Dogs to start their denning season. June should reveal whether we will have a pack denning on the reserve this denning season. With three packs moving through MalaMala in May we are confident at least one of them will den on the reserve.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED	43
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## **CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS**

May marks the start of the dry season and with surface water drying up across the reserve the significance of the Sand River in the landscape will be noticeable. Elephants and buffalo are water dependent species, and the Sand River draws these two species onto its banks. In May there were 111 sightings of elephant and 54 sightings of buffalo. The bulk of the buffalo sightings were of males in the Sand River.

### Other sightings of interest

- The **HYENA DEN** midway along the MalaMala Flockfield Boundary is still active, and at least three cubs have been seen.
- A **CARACAL** was seen on Emsagwen west of the Matshapiri River on two occasions (3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>). We assume this was the same individual. This is the first sighting of caracal on the reserve since two were chased by the Kambula Pride on Emsagwen on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2020.
- Several sightings of puff adders and pythons were recorded through the month as they move before the winter months set in.
- Two sightings of **AFRICAN WILD CATS** were recorded, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> one was south of the Ngoboswan Donga and one was north of New Rocks on the 25<sup>th</sup>.
- A few sightings of **HONEY BADGERS** were recorded.
- A **SERVAL** was seen north of Wild Dog Rocks open area on the 28<sup>th</sup>.