

**MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – FEBRUARY 2015**

AREAS COVERED: MARTHLY / EYREFIELD / MALAMALA / FLOCKFIELD / CHARLESTON

**WEATHER SUMMARY – FEBRUARY**

Maximum temperature (°C)	39
Minimum temperature (°C)	13
Mean maximum (°C)	32.8
Mean minimum (°C)	22
Rainfall (mm)	48.5
Days of rain	8

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF FEBRUARY 2015

**LIONS**

**STYX PRIDE = 9**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>12 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>7 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>2 FEMALE SUB ADULTS</b>	<b>4 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>2 MALE SUB ADULTS</b>	<b>4 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 3 MONTHS</b>

MALA MALA, EYREFIELD  
(24 sightings)

Seen on all but four days during February, the Styx pride made up more than half of the lion sightings during the month. These lions clearly do not hold a territory at Mala Mala yet, as between the members of the pride during February they were recorded from Clarendon open area to Zebra Skull South – a range which extends over 70% of the property. Yet again this pride, or at least some of the members were seen on both sides of the river in February, with eight sightings of these animals being on the western bank of the Sand river.

The core of the Styx pride consists of the two adult lionesses, as well as the three cubs. On six occasions during the month, these members were seen with the two sub-adult males. In addition to these six sightings, these impressive young males were seen three times on their own – quite some distance from the pride. On one of these occasions the young lioness from the Eyrefield pride was seen in the company of these two males on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February.

The remaining two members of the Styx pride; the sub-adult females were seen ten times during the month. Unlike January these lionesses were not seen once with any of the members of the pride. They were seen once with an identified pride of 11 lions on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February however, at Clarendon open area. The core pride was seen most frequently, with 19 sightings in total, either alone or with the two young males.

Of the 24 sightings during February, the pride was seen three times on kills. The young lionesses killed an impala around Picadilly triangle. The other two kills were made by the core pride, one of which was a kudu bull near the exit of lion loop and the other a waterbuck bull near the entrance of Flockfield lookout.

**EYREFIELD PRIDE = 7**

<b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>7 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>7 YEARS 7 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>	<b>3 YEARS 0 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>3 YEARS 0 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>	<b>2 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>	<b>2 YEARS 5 MONTHS</b>

MALA MALA, FLOCKFIELD  
(3 sightings)

As with January, the Eyrefield pride, or at least a representative thereof were seen three times during the month of February. The first sighting was ten days into the month when the youngest lioness was on the airstrip with the two young male lions from the Styx pride. She was seen again the following day, however this time she was seen alone around the old airstrip.

The next sighting of this pride was more than two weeks later, when they were all found together. The Eyrefield pride were all found fast asleep on our boundary road, where they spent a majority of the day.

**FOURWAYS PRIDE = 2**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>UNKNOWN AGE</b>
<b>1 SUB ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>4 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>

EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of this pride during February, which consists of the two lionesses. The males are considered to have gone independent and will now be referred to as the Jakkalsdraai males.

**MARTHLY PRIDE = 7**

<b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>12 YEARS 6 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>3 YEARS 10 MONTHS</b>
<b>3 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 8 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 8 MONTHS</b>

MARHTLY  
(3 sightings)

The Marthly pride was seen three times during February, over the middle of the month. These seven lions were seen around Marthly on two of the occasions and once in front of Mala Mala main camp, on the western bank of the Sand river.

**CHARLESTON PRIDE = 3**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>10 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>2 SUB ADULT MALES</b>	<b>3 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>

CHARLESTON  
(1 sighting of the female; 1 sighting of the two males)

The Charleston pride was seen once during February, with all of the members together. This sighting was on Charleston drive, north of Charleston koppies. It is great to see this pride together again, a second month in a row. Especially with all of the individuals look so well.

**TJELLAHANGA PRIDE=9**

**2 ADULT FEMALES**

**1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE**

**6 SUB-ADULT MALES**

EASTERN CHARLESTON, EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, EASTERN MALAMALA  
(0 sightings)

**UNKNOWN AGES**

**± 3 YEARS 1 MONTH**

**± 3 YEARS 1 MONTH**

There were no confirmed sightings of this pride during February.

**JAKKALSDRAAI MALES = 2**

**2 SUB ADULT MALES**

**4 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON

(6 sightings)

February was the seventh consecutive month where the two young males, previously from the Fourways pride were not seen with the females. As these males have been separated from the pride for over six months now and have been establishing themselves in the southern parts of the reserve, it is safe to say they have officially gone independent. This coalition of two are now referred to as the Jakkalsdraai males, and were seen a total of six times during February.

These sightings which ranged between Charleston north crossing and Charleston river rocks, included some interesting occurrences. One of the highlights was watching these two males feeding off the carcass of a young buffalo calf which they had captured on Dudley lookout on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February. This did not last these two remarkable males too long, as there was nothing remaining of the carcass the following day.

**CLARENDON MALES=2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±10 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

NORTHERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN MARTHLY

(5 sightings)

There were five encounters with these two adult male lions, which were spaced out between the second and the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. It is always an impressive sighting seeing these two males, some of which included them patrolling around Eyrefield, and making their presence well known. On the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, there was a bout of roaring between what appeared to be a number of lions. We followed up and found that the Clarendon had been making their presence so well known, the current dominant males – the Manyalethi males, moved into the area and made theirs' known too. Very interesting times lay ahead on Mala Mala as the ongoing lion territorial battle continues.

**MANYELETHI MALES = 4**

**± 10 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

MATRHLY, EYREFIELD, MALA MALA, NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD  
DOMINANT OVER THE STYX, EYREFIELD, FOURWAYS, MARTHLY AND  
BREAKAWAY MARTHLY PRIDES  
(1 sighting)

Three of the four Manyalethi males were seen in February, on one occasion. Their arrival was announced by a roaring competition which was heard in the early morning and many lion tracks found on the property. As it turns out, the Clarendon males were patrolling around the Picadilly triangle area and were found just south of Senegal bush.

The three Manyalethi males were making their presence well known from Euphorbia drive, some ways to the west of where the Clarendon males were located. It is inevitable that the longstanding dominant, Manyalethi males, will eventually have to defend their territory against these incoming Clarendon males, should they wish to remain in dominance.

**Other lions encountered**

- **No ID pride of 11** (1 sighting):
  - Three females and eight cubs (11 in total), were seen at Clarendon open area on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, in one sighting. They were not the only lions at this sighting, as this pride was joined by the two sub-adult females from the Styx pride.

**NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LIONS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)**

<b>February</b>	<b>44</b>
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**LEOPARDS:**

**BICYCLE CROSSING MALE**

**13 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON  
(5 sightings)

For the first time in five months, the Bicycle crossing male was seen more than three times during the month – with a total of five sightings. This dominant male, was seen between the tenth and 25<sup>th</sup> of February, the first of which was at Styx crossing. The following day he was seen about 5 kilometres south, of this position on first turning Mamba waterhole. Five days later, the Bicycle crossing male was seen again – this time much further north. The remaining two sightings of this leopard were also very spaced out. All of this patrolling and roaring indicates that he is still in control of his territory and makes it very well known to any potential competition that he is around and still in great condition.

**AIRSTRIP MALE**

**8 YEARS 9 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(6 sightings)

As in January, the Airstrip male leopard was seen six times during the month of February. The furthest north he was located was on the northern parts of Steenbok drive. Two of the sightings of this leopard were in Marthly, and the remaining three sightings east of Mala Mala main camp. One of which he was watched stalking and capturing an Egyptian goose in the sand river, north of the causeway.

**CHARLESTON MALE**

**8 YEARS 9 MONTHS**

EASTERN CHARLESTON, NORTHERN TOULON  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**WEST STREET MALE**

**5 YEARS 9 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**NEWINGTON MALE**

**6 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Newington male during February; however reports indicate that he is not as healthy as he was in January when we last saw him. It is assumed he had some interaction and did not come out the victor. We hope he bounces back into good health, as he has done before.

**HOGVAAL MALE**

**7 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

EASTERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN MALAMALA, NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**TREEHOUSE MALE**  
WESTERN MALAMALA  
(10 sightings)

**± 5 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

The Treehouse male leopard had the most individual encounters during February, with ten in total. This leopard is making his presence well known around the western bank, as during a number of the sightings he was seen scent marking.

On the sixth of the month, he killed a young impala which did not last the Treehouse male very long as there were no remains the following day. This was not the only kill he was seen feeding off during the month, as on the 25<sup>th</sup> he was seen on a female impala kill which was hoisted in a marula tree north of track to Flockfield tower. Whether he killed this or not, we are uncertain as he was not the only leopard in the area. The Tamboti female was also seen feeding off the carcass.

**TSLEBE ROCKS MALE**  
NORTHERN EYREFIELD  
(2 sightings)

**± 8 YEARS 7 MONTHS**

Of the two sightings of the Tsebe rocks male leopard during February; one was in the Mlowathi river south of Mlowathi dam crossing, the second was in very close proximity to the river.

**PRINCESS ALICE PANS MALE**  
WESTERN MALAMALA  
(2 sightings)

**14 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

During February the Princess Alice Pans male was seen twice; once on the fourth of the month and again the following day. The first sighting of the Princess Alice Pans male was on Kikilezihash, north of Maxims lookout. The second sighting was one which was more unusual for this male as he was seen on the eastern side of the river, at the junction of Scott's road and River road mvubu.

A leopard's territory isn't set in stone, so they do move in and out of their established areas from time to time. However, when it is taken into consideration how frequently he has been seen within his territory previously (on average nine times a month for the six months preceding February) and his interaction with the young, yet very large treehouse male leopard – one has to wonder if perhaps the Princess Alice Pans male is maybe getting too old to defend his territory. In addition to this, there have been reports of this male leopard being seen on a property a very long way from Mala Mala.

Let's hope this does not mean the end of the reign of this legendary individual on the western bank.

**GOWRIE MALE**  
NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sightings)

**± 7 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**RIVER ROCKS MALE**  
(0 sightings)

**5 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**KIKILEZI FEMALE  
2 FEMALE CUBS**

**13 YEARS 5 MONTHS  
1 YEAR 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALA-MALA, WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLI  
(4 sightings of female, 5 sightings of female and cubs, 5 sightings of cubs without female)

There were 14 sightings of the Kikilezi female and her cubs, in total during February. Four were of the Kikilezi female on her own, five of the cubs on their own and five of all three together. The first three sightings of February were of these leopards all together during the first ten days of the month. The next two sightings (16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>), were of the Kikilezi female and one of her cubs. It was during these two sightings which were the beginning of what would turn out to be a very productive month in terms of finding and/or seeing the Kikilezi female making kills.

In total four were seen during February, the first of which was on the 16<sup>th</sup> where she captured a young Nyala on track to plank's pan. One of her cubs was afforded the opportunity of honing its hunting skills and was watched releasing, recapturing and treeing this quarry repeatedly. The second kill was the following day with a young impala around northern extension Picadilly, again the Kikilezi female was only seen with one cub. The cub of the Kikilezi female was found later that day, exploring around Stwise – quite some distance from her mother.

The next kill which was found had evidence that the Kikilezi female had been in the area, however she was nowhere to be seen. Instead the two cubs were found with a young klipspringer kill on the western bank of the Mlowathi river, which one had taken up into a tree. They spent the remainder of the day in this position, which allowed us a number of excellent opportunities to watch the two cubs feeding. The last kill which was seen was of the Kikilezi female on her own and a nyala, which she captured and dragged into the Ngoboswan donga.

**TAMBOTI FEMALE**

**7 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALA MALA  
(5 sightings)

The Tamboti female was seen five times in February, between the second and 25<sup>th</sup> of the month – a majority of which were close to Campbell road, our western boundary. A few times during the month, it was reported that she was looking very pregnant and on one occasion it was clearly visible there was some movement in her belly.

The last sighting of the Tamboti female for February was one which was shared with the Treehouse male. Between them, they were taking turns feeding off the carcass of a female impala which they had stashed in a large marula tree, north of the track to Flockfield tower. It was during this sighting that there was clear indication of suckle marks on the teats of the Tamboti female, indicating she had given birth and cubs had been suckling.

Having evidence of pregnancy, followed by that of cubs being born and a good idea of where the den site is positioned is all very exciting. We look forward to eventually meeting the newest addition to the leopard family.

**ISLAND FEMALE****2 YEARS 1 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALA MALA  
(6 sightings)

The once daughter of the Tamboti female, now considered to be fully independent of any maternal care, has been given a new name to honour this step towards independence. This young female was seen a total of six times during February.

The first two sightings of the Island female (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February) found her in a Jackalberry tree, with the remains of a bushbuck kill which she had stashed out of the reach of any potential scavengers. The following day, she was located in the Sand river, west of the watercourse. Three more sightings of the Island female took place during the month of February, where she was seen around the old airstrip and on Jerimiah's loop.

**MLOWATHI FEMALE****8 YEARS 0 MONTHS**

NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD  
(1 sighting)

Three months running the Mlowathi female has been seen on one occasion. In February, she was seen with her cub, in the Mlowathi river south of the Gowrie boundary.

**JAKKALSDRAAI FEMALE****15 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

CENTRAL & WESTERN CHARLESTON, EAST OF THE SAND RIVER  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**OSTRICH KOPPIES FEMALE****10 YEARS 2 MONTHS****TWO CUBS****8 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD

(0 sightings of female, 2 sightings of female and cub, 0 sighting of cub without female)

It has been over three months now where the female cub of the Ostrich Koppies female has not been seen, it is assumed that this cub is no longer around. However, her brother is looking in good health and was seen on two occasions where he was seen with his mother during February. On both occasions, 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, this pair was seen at the junction of Ostrich koppies road and Buffalo bush dam road. The latter of the two sightings provided much entertainment as these two navigated through some particularly thick vegetation, around the territory of the Ostrich Koppies female.

**MATSHIPIRI FEMALE****14 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD  
(1 sighting)

The Matshapiri female was seen once in February, as in January. This time she was on Reedbuck road, which is situated in the north eastern parts of the property.



**DUDLEY FEMALE**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(1 sighting)

**16 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

The Dudley female was seen once during the month of February, on the northern parts of Scott's road. She is looking good for a female leopard of almost 16 and a half years of age.

**DAUGHTER OF THE DUDLEY FEMALE**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(1 sighting)

**1 YEAR 11 MONTHS**

As with her mother, the daughter of the Dudley female was seen once in February. She was seen on the Western bank, at the junction of Skukuza road and the track which leads to the parking bay. With so little sightings of both of these leopards together, it is getting to that stage where she could be considered to have gone independent.

**EMSAGWENI FEMALE**  
MALA-MALA  
(1 sighting)

**5 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

The sixth of February was the one and only sighting of the Emsagweni female, where she was seen in the Matshapiri river, north of the Hogvaal donga. She is not one to stick to open areas, and was eventually lost heading eastwards out of the river.

**FLOCKFIELD FEMALE**  
CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

**10 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**Other leopards encountered:**

- **The Marthly male leopard:** this leopard was seen on one occasion during February, on the 19<sup>th</sup>. He was found on the track which leads from the booms to the causeway.
- **No ID males:** (2 sightings)
- **No ID females:** (1 sightings)
- **No ID cubs:** (1 sighting): A single cub was found on Stwise on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, which was estimated to be about 7 – 8 months of age.
- **No ID:** (1 sighting)

**NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)**

February	23
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## CHEETAH

Three different cheetahs were encountered during February, the first of which was on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. This individual was found on the Charleston-Toulon boundary, about 200 meters east of our boundary. This thickly vegetated area is not a place one would expect to find a cheetah in the first place, but what came as a real surprise was the fact that it had recently killed an impala.

The second sighting of cheetah was the two males which frequent Clarendon open area. These two were seen patrolling their territory in the late afternoon, making use of their usual scent marking spots – namely a very prominent marula tree as well as a dead tree which they often climb onto to survey the area.

### **NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED**

<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>
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## CAPE HUNTING DOGS

February was a bit of a slow month in terms of cape hunting dog sightings, with no sightings being recorded. There was however evidence of these animals making their way on to and off of the property during the month.

### **NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)**

<b>February</b>	<b>0</b>
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## CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

February was a very busy month, with abundant sightings of both elephants and buffalo. During the 28 days of the month, we had 92 sightings of buffalo and 149 sightings of elephants.

The buffalo sightings were made up of 9 herds being seen and 270 individuals. The elephant sightings, consisted of 96 different herds and 270 individuals.

### **TOTAL SIGHTINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2015**

Lion:	56
Leopard:	62
Elephant:	149
Buffalo:	92
Cheetah:	3
Cape Hunting Dog:	0

**MalaMala Big Five monthly analysis:**

**FEBRUARY 2015**

	LION		LEOPARD		ELEPHANT		BUFFALO	
	Animals	Sightings	Animals	Sightings	Animals	Sightings	Animals	Sightings
1	7	2	4	2	3H	3	8	2
2	2	1	1	1	8H	6	10	4
3	8	3	3	3	2H + 3	5	6	2
4	8	3	5	4	5H + 3	8	2	2
5	2	1	8	6	4H + 8	8	29	9
6	5	1	2	2	3H + 5	7	2H + 3	4
7	8	3	2	1	5H + 1	5	1H + 1	2
8	2	1	0	0	4H + 4	8	1H + 6	3
9	5	1	0	0	2H + 4	6	17	5
10	10	3	5	3	4H + 4	5	2H + 12	7
11	3	2	2	2	2H + 2	4	16	4
12	27	4	3	3	2H + 3	4	1H + 9	4
13	14	2	3	3	4H + 3	7	19	5
14	2	1	3	2	3H + 3	4	2	1
15	11	3	1	1	3H + 6	7	1H + 11	5
16	14	3	5	4	3H + 4	7	1H + 10	4
17	9	3	4	3	5H + 3	6	20	4
18	11	3	3	3	7H	7	6	2
19	7	1	4	3	6H + 2	8	9	3
20	7	2	3	3	2H + 5	8	9	4
21	0	0	2	2	4H	4	3	1
22	7	3	1	1	4H	4	4	1
23	2	1	1	1	1H	1	5	1
24	7	2	1	1	1H	1	5	1
25	2	1	4	3	4H	4	13	4
26	14	3	2	2	2H + 1	3	15	3
27	7	2	4	3	3H + 4	6	8	2
28	5	1	0	0	2H + 1	3	10	3
	206	56	76	62	96H + 69	149	9H + 270	92

**MalaMala Kill Analysis****February 2015**

	<b>Lions</b>	<b>Leopards</b>	<b>Wild dog</b>	<b>Cheetah</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Impala</b>	1	2		1	4
<b>Duiker</b>					
<b>Klipspringer</b>		1			1
<b>Buffalo</b>	1				1
<b>Bushbuck</b>		1			1
<b>Warthog</b>					
<b>Nyala</b>		1			1
<b>Waterbuck</b>	1				1
<b>Wildebeest</b>					1
<b>Kudu</b>	1				
<b>Giraffe</b>					
<b>Other</b>					
<b>Total</b>	4	5		1	10