

MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – DECEMBER 2016

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

WEATHER SUMMARY – DECEMBER

DECEMBER WEATHER SUMMARY					
<i>TEMPERATURE</i>					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	36	28,8	Maximum	98,6	83,9
Minimum	18	18,7	Minimum	64,4	65,7
<i>RAINFALL</i>					
Millimeters		Inches		Days of rain	
49,5		1,95		5	

*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF DECEMBER 2016

LIONS

STYX PRIDE = 5

1 ADULT FEMALE	13 YEARS 11 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	8 YEARS 11 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALES	5 YEARS 11 MONTHS
2 ADULT MALES	4 YEARS 11 MONTHS
2 CUBS	±3 MONTHS
(2 sightings)	

NORTHERN EYREFIELD

Males last seen with core pride: May, 2015. Last seen: January,

Representatives from the Styx Pride were viewed on four days in December. The three females and two cubs were first viewed in the Mlowati river, north of Mlowati dam on the 8th of January. They were viewed on a Buffalo kill at that position and moved off from the kill that evening.

It wasn't till the 19th that the three females and their cubs were seen at Mlowati dam. They remained near Mlowati dam for two days before moving back north off the property. A week later two of the females, along with the two cubs were seen at Clarendon dam. One of the Gowrie males was also seen on this occasion. The lionesses were viewed that evening hunting buffalo at Clarendon dam. They chased the entire herd into Kruger before abandoning the hunt.

EYREFIELD PRIDE = 10

2 ADULT FEMALES	9 YEARS 6 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT MALE	4 YEARS 10 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE	4 YEARS 10 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT MALE	4 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT MALE	4 YEARS 4 MONTHS
1 FEMALE CUB	1 YEAR 1 MONTH
1 MALE CUB	1 YEAR 1 MONTH
1 FEMALE CUB	1 YEAR
1 MALE CUB	1 YEAR

MALA MALA, FLOCKFIELD

(19 sightings)

The Eyrefield Pride were viewed on 19 days in December. They spent most of their time in Flockfield, first being seen on the northern boundary with the remains of a zebra kill on the 1st. They were then seen three days later with the two Matshipri males, south of their previous position with little remains of a buffalo kill. The following day they were on a fresh buffalo kill in the same position. This trend continued another day as they brought down a third buffalo, further east into Flockfield this time. They moved west the following day along with the two Matshipri males before bringing down yet another buffalo in southern Flockfield.

The Eyrefield pride then moved west off the property for a week. They were then found on the 17th in central Flockfield. They walked north to Princess Alice Pans over the next few day and then back to Flockfield Pools in the Sand river. On the 26th the females from the Eyrefield Pride proved that experience trumps youth when five young females from the Marthly Breakaway Pride killed a buffalo at Styx rocks. The three females overheard the commotion of the buffalo being suffocated and walked over to investigate. A tense standoff between the eldest female and the five breakaway lionesses, the five young lioness gave chase first but were soon confronted by reinforcements from the south. With four cubs at stake, the Eyrefield females soon had the five young females fleeing. The victory was made ever sweeter by the buffalo left behind by their unwelcome adversaries.

The Eyrefield Pride moved south the following day and remained in central Flockfield for the remainder of the month.

FOURWAYS PRIDE = 6

1 ADULT FEMALE	UNKNOWN AGE
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	6 YEARS 6 MONTHS
2 MALE CUBS	1 YEAR 1 MONTH
2 FEMALE CUBS	1 YEAR 1 MONTH
EASTERN FLOCKFIELD	
(3 sightings)	

The Fourways Pride were viewed on three days in December. They were first encountered with the two Matshipri males in eastern Flockfield on the 18th. The following day the two males left the pride and the females walked from their previous position at the borehole, northward to the windmill where they were viewed again at the same place on the 23rd.

MARTHLY PRIDE = 11

2 ADULT FEMALES	14 YEARS 4 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	5 YEARS 5 MONTHS
3 SUB-ADULT MALES	3 YEARS 6 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 6 MONTHS
2 CUBS	±7 MONTHS
3 CUBS	±6 MONTHS
MARTHLY, MALAMALA	

(1 sighting)

The Marthly Pride was notably scarce in the month of December. Members of the Marthly Pride were only viewed on one occasion in December. Two of the females were seen in the Sand river, west of Bicycle crossing on the 14th. They then moved southwards off the property later that afternoon.

CHARLESTON PRIDE = 5

1 ADULT FEMALE	11 YEARS 11 MONTHS
2 ADULT MALES	5 YEARS 7 MONTHS
2 MALE CUBS	± 1 YEAR 9 MONTHS
CHARLESTON	

(3 sightings of the two adult males; 0 of the two male cubs; 0 of the adult female)

There were no sightings of the Charleston female and her two cubs. The two males were viewed on three days in December. They were first seen on the 14th around KK Pans in Charleston.

The Charleston male lions were later viewed together on a buffalo kill in near Trollips camp on the 26th. They remained with the kill for two days before moving off the property westwards.

MATSHAPIRI PRIDE = 3

2 ADULT MALES ±6 YEARS 7 MONTHS

1 ADULT FEMALE ±4 YEARS 7 MONTHS

FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

DOMINANT OVER THE EYREFIELD AND FOURWAYS PRIDES

First encounter: April 2015

(23 sightings)

The two Matshipri males were seen on 23 days in December. They continued to assert their dominance on the central parts of the property. They continued to patrol from southern Flockfield to northern Mala Mala, their territory also extends the entire width of the property. The two males are now in their prime and are starting to put increasing pressure on the two Clarendon male lions to their north.

First encountered northeast of Maxims Lookout on the 1st, the two Matshipri male lions split up that evening. The following day the lighter maned male was seen in eastern Flockfield and the darker maned male was seen mating with one of the Marthly Breakaway lionesses at West Street bridge. Two days later the two males were reunited with the Eyrefield pride on a buffalo kill north of the Kapen river. The two Matshipri males remained in the company of the Eyrefield Pride for the following week and were seen on four separate buffalo kills in that time.

The Matshipri males then moved west off the property until the 15th when the lighter maned male was seen at the White Cloth. He reunited with his brother two days later in eastern Flockfield before joining up with the Fourways Pride on the 18th. They only remained with the Fourways Pride for one day and then continued to patrol around Flockfield until the end of the month.

The two males were viewed mating with two lionesses from the Marthly Breakaway Pride on the 28th at Matshipri open area. They were viewed together for a day before rejoining the Eyrefield pride in northern Flockfield on the 29th.

TJELLAHANGA PRIDE=9

2 ADULT FEMALES UNKNOWN AGES

1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE ± 5 YEARS

6 SUB-ADULT MALES ± 5 YEARS

EASTERN CHARLESTON, EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, EASTERN MALAMALA

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

JAKKALSDRAAI MALES = 2
2 ADULT MALES **6 YEARS 5 MONTHS**
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

CLARENDON MALES = 2
2 ADULT MALES **±12 YEARS**
MARTHLY, NORTHERN MALAMALA
(19 sightings)

The two Clarendon males were viewed on 17 occasions in December. They were seen mostly in the company of the females from the Marthly Breakaway Pride. The two males were first viewed at Piccadilly triangle with one of the females from the aforementioned pride on the 1st. From there the two males move north into Eyrefield where they were seen near Senegal Bush. From there the two males split, the lighter maned male went to Campbell Koppies and the other male joined up with one of the Breakaway lionesses at Piccadilly Pans.

The darker maned male then joined up with four of the other females at the airstrip while his subordinate brother remained at Campbell Koppies. It wasn't until the 9th that the two brothers reunited at Piccadilly Pans before splitting up again. On the 16th the reason for the somewhat erratic comings and goings of these males became clear as two sets of cubs made their first appearance at Campbell Koppies and Ostrich Koppies respectively. The Clarendon males the clear sires of the newest generation as they were viewed in the presence of both females and cubs.

The two Clarendon male lions continued their trend of spontaneously splitting up and reuniting for the remainder of the month. Moving between Campbell Koppies and the Airstrip along with some of the females with the Marthly Breakaway Pride.

GOWRIE MALES = 5
1 ADULT MALE **± 6 YEARS 2 MONTHS**
1 ADULT MALE **± 5 YEARS 8 MONTHS**
3 ADULT MALES **± 5 YEARS 2 MONTHS**
EYREFIELD, MALAMALA - DOMINANT OVER THE STYX PRIDE
First encounter: September 2015
(3 sightings)

The 7th of December saw one of the representatives from the Gowrie male coalition pushing quite far southeast into the furthest corner of their territory. The single male was seen on the Split Rock donga

before moving northeast to Matshipri dam and back into the relative safety of the territory guarded by his three brothers.

It wasn't until the 27th that one of the representatives from the Gowrie male coalition was viewed at Clarendon dam in the company of the three Styx lionesses and their two cubs. The blond maned male showed incredible patience with the young cubs as he become the stage for the inevitable wrestling match between the two cubs.

Other lions encountered

- **Marthly break-away pride:** 18 sightings

The six young females have become a regular sighting on Mala Mala since late October. They had been viewed mating with the two Clarendon males and subsequently started spending more and more time around Campbell Koppies. We suspected that they may possibly be looking for potential den sites. And on the 16th of the month our suspicions were not only confirmed but completely surpassed. One of the females was seen at Campbell Koppies with two young cubs and another female was then followed to Ostrich Koppies where another three cubs were unveiled. This marks the not only the beginning of the next generation of lions but the beginning of a new pride as these females have truly proven their independence.

- One of the members of the Sand River pride was viewed at Rocky Crossing on the 7th
- A young male lion was viewed in eastern Flockfield on the 28th

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LIONS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

DECEMBER	40
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LEOPARDS:

BICYCLE CROSSING MALE

14 YEARS 10 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD

(5 sightings)

The legendary Bicycle Crossing male leopard was seen on five occasions in December. Any encounter with this leopard is always a very humbling one, as he always carries a calm demeanor despite the unrelenting pressure from younger male leopards to take over any portion of his massive territory. Seen on his regular route through Flockfield the Bicycle Crossing male was seen at Styx crossing on the 4th and on Rock Drift road on the 13th. He was only encountered again on the 25th at Kapen open area where he was viewed over the next two days walking to Flockfield lookout and settling there for an afternoon.

WEST STREET MALE

7 YEARS 9 MONTHS

CHARLESTON

(1 sighting)

The West Street male leopard was viewed on the 31st near Lion Waterhole, with an unidentified female leopard. They were viewed in a leadwood tree in close proximity to the Eyrefield Pride and 2 Matshipri males. Luckily both parties parted ways without any exchange.

TREEHOUSE MALE

± 7 YEARS 1 MONTH

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, MARTHLY

(3 sightings)

Seen on only three occasions in December, the Treehouse male seems to have his mind set on taking over as much real estate as possible. With the exception of the times he makes a kill (which never happened in December) the Treehouse male is never seen in the same place two days in a row. Most of the sightings of this leopard are of him patrolling and marking his territory.

TSLEBE ROCKS MALE

± 10 YEARS 6 MONTHS

NORTHERN EYREFIELD

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

ACCIPITER MALE
MALAMALAAA
(1 sighting)

± 6 YEARS 4 MONTHS

There were only two sightings of the Accipiter male leopard in December . He was first seen around Buffalo bush dam on the 20th. Two days later he was viewed at Matshipri open area. The Accipiter male however never hangs around for more than a fleeting glimpse. The 'wild side' of the Accipiter male remains an interesting aspect of any encounter. Hopefully with time he will relax around the vehicles long enough for us to enjoy him.

SPLIT ROCK MALE
EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD
Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, independent latter half of 2015
(1 sighting)

2 YEARS 6 MONTHS

This young male, previously known as the son of the Ostrich Koppies female has been independent for quite some time now - and with no sightings of his mother, nor him in her company, since the end of 2015. The Spit Rock male was viewed on four days in January.

The young Split Rock male leopard was only viewed on one occasion in December. He was seen trailing (not too far) behind the Accipiter male leopard from Buffalo Bush dam on the 21st. He remains a very bold young leopard who never ceases to surprise with his tenacity.

KIKILEZI FEMALE
1 MALE CUB
1 FEMALE CUB

15 YEARS 2 MONTHS
8 MONTHS
8 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY
(0 sighting of female, 2 sightings of the cubs, 8 sightings of female and cubs)

The Kikilezi female and her two cubs have been moving off the property westwards more frequently. Seen on only 8 occasions with the cubs and 2 without, it was notable that the cubs are being left more longer periods of time. Undoubtedly the appetite of two growing cubs is the cause of the increasingly lengthy hunts. The southeastern corner of Marthly forms the perfect sanctuary from potential threats such as lion and hyena.

The Kikilezi female continues to show her wisdom and experience in raising her cubs. At 16 years of age she is most definitely in her twilight years but still manages to keep her cubs safe and fed.

PICADILLY FEMALE**3 YEARS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

Daughter of the Kikilezi female, independent first quarter of 2016

(10 sightings)

For the first time, the Piccadilly female was seen on more occasions in a month than her mother. The Piccadilly female has taken control of northern Marthly as well as the southern reaches of the Mlowati river and the area between Main Camp and Campbell Koppies. The Piccadilly female has completely ousted her mother from her former territory where there is no shortage of food, water or cover.

First encountered at the Mlowati spot with the remains of an Impala kill on the 2nd, the Piccadilly female was seen patrolling along the Mlowati river over the following week. She reappeared again on the 16th with the remains of a Impala lamb kill opposite Main Camp. She moved into Marthly the following day and was seen along the northern bank of the Sand river, west of Bicycle Crossing before returning back to the lower reaches of the Mlowati river.

The Piccadilly female remains a promising young leopardess, who's proximity to Main Camp makes her one of the more common leopards to encounter. And it's only fitting that she takes over the reigns as 'most seen leopard ' in the month of her third birthday.

SIBUYE FEMALE**3 YEARS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

Daughter of the Kikilezi female, independent first quarter of 2016

(2 sightings)

The Sibuye female, once known as the 2:2 spot pattern daughter of the Picadilly female - the same age as her sister, seen less frequently and somewhat less dominant. She is seen from the northern parts of Eyrefield, and has been recorded as far south as West Street bridge. The Sibuye female was seen fairly often in the western and central parts of Eyrefield, along which Sibuye road runs, hence her naming.

The Sibuye female leopard was seen on two days in December. Both time she was seen near the road after which she was named. The Sibuye female was first encountered on the 22nd walking east along a game path, south of Sibuye road. She was only viewed very briefly before a steenbok caught her attention and she set off in hot pursuit. She was seen again on the 25th, south of her previous position.

TAMBOTI FEMALE**9 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

(1 sighting)

The Tamboti female leopard was only seen on one occasion in December when she was seen near

Rattrays Camp. The increased lion activity along the western bank of the Sand River has caused her to spend more time in the western parts of her territory which is west of our boundary.

ISLAND FEMALE **3 YEARS 10 MONTHS**
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA
Daughter of the Tamboti female, independent first quarter of 2015
(6 sightings)

The Island female leopard was encountered on six occasions in December. She continues to dominate her mothers old territory along the banks of the Sand River between Main Camp and West Street bridge. Interestingly the Island female has been showing particular interest in an area of river bushwillows opposite Maxims Lookout. This could possibly indicate that she is looking for potential den sites. She has been viewed mating with the Treehouse male in previous months. So time will tell if she is indeed going to be a mother sometime soon.

MLOWATHI FEMALE **9 YEARS 11 MONTHS**
DAUGHTER OF THE MLOWATHI FEMALE **±4 YEARS**
NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

MATSHIPURI FEMALE **16 YEARS 2 MONTHS**
EASTERN MALAMALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD
(1 sighting)

There was only one sighting of this this elusive female. She was viewed on the 18th at Buffalo Bush dam. Another leopard in their twilight years, the Matshipuri female is starting to look her age. Her tattered ears bearing the signs of a long life well lived.

EMSAGWENI FEMALE **7 YEARS**
MALAMALA
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

FLOCKFIELD FEMALE **12 YEARS 8 MONTHS**
CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

LOOKOUT FEMALE
MALE CUB

6 YEARS 1 MONTH
1 YEAR 1 MONTH

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON
(0 sightings of the female, 0 sightings of the female and cub, 0 sighting of the cub)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

Other leopards encountered:

- **Males:** (11 sightings, 7 individuals)
 - There were eleven sightings of seven different unidentified male leopards during December:
 - The Senegal Bush male was viewed on the 1st with an Impala kill, south of Mlowati dam. He was seen feeding off another Impala kill for the last three days of the month south of the position of the first kill. The kill attracted the attention of a few Hyena. But the kill was safely stashed in a knob thorn tree.
 - There was an unidentified male leopard viewed in the Matshipri river, north of the confluence with the Sand river on the 23rd
 - Another unidentified male leopard was viewed on the 23rd in the Kapen river at Styx crossing.
 - A nervous male leopard was seen on the Charleston Flockfield boundary on the 25th.
 - An unidentified male was seen in southwest Charleston, near Trollips Camp on the 26th
 - Another unknown male leopard was viewed to the west of West Street on the 30th
 - An unidentified male was chased up a tree by Cape Hunting Dogs on the 31st opposite Beaumonts Camp.

- **Females:** (4 sightings, 4 individuals)
 - There were four sightings of four separate unidentified female leopards in December:
 - There was a unidentified female at Calabash crossing on the 9th
 - A young female suspected to be from the west was seen on an Impala kill, on the western bank of the Sand river south of Main Camp on the 23rd
 - There was an unidentified female in a tree with the West Street male near Lion Waterhole on the 31st. The two leopards were in close proximity to the Eyrefield Pride but managed to remain undetected by the lions.
 - Another female was viewed at Clarendon on the 31st.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

DECEMBER	23
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CHEETAH

December saw an additional male cheetah walking onto the property into eastern Flockfield. He remained in the area around the borehole from the 2nd to the 4th before leaving the property. The two cheetah brothers were seen on six occasions in December. They were seen at Wild Dog rocks on the 1st, an area which is not usually visited by the two males. They were seen moving north off the property three days later.

The two brothers then made an appearance north of Matshipri dam, with the remains of an Impala lamb kill. They walked east towards Clarendon after finishing their meal and nearly encountered the Styx pride and Gowrie male. Luckily they emerged south of Clarendon dam and outside of the gaze of the unsuspecting lions.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED

DECEMBER	3
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

There were a total of six different Cape Hunting Dogs were encountered over seven days in December. They consisted of two separate packs. One pack is made up of two males and a female. The second pack consists of two females and a male. The pack with the two males was viewed in the northern parts of the property. They were first encountered on the 3rd at Mlowati Pans, they were seen another two times in December, again at Mlowati Pans on the 23rd and again at Campbell Koppies on the 30th.

The pack with two females were seen further south of the other pack. They were first located at Buffalo Pans on the 3rd, they ran south from there and were located the following day at Dudley Lookout. They were seen again on the 26th and 27th around the causeway. They then moved south again and were located opposite Beaumonts Camp, chasing a male leopard up a tree on the 31st.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

DECEMBER	6
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

There was a noticeable reduction in the number of buffalo seen in December as apposed to previous months. The increased rain and subsequent vegetation growth means that the buffalo don't have to depend on the Sand River as their only source of water. They are thus able to spend more time away from the river, grazing in areas that would otherwise be unreachable in drier conditions. The majority of the sightings were of lone bulls with only 4 large herds being seen during the month.

The elephant sightings remain somewhat unaffected by the changing conditions. The only major difference was that the large herds have split into smaller herds. The abundance of water has allowed for long awaited swims in the various pools, dams and pans around the property.

OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

There were numerous sightings of Hyena as the den site in Charleston remains very active with nine cubs. There were also numerous honey badger, African wildcat and even a very special sighting of a Mellers mongoose close to Main Camp.

TOTAL SIGHTINGS: DECEMBER 2016	
LION	93
LEOPARD	62
ELEPHANT	97
BUFFALO	54
CHEETAH	8
CAPE HUNTING DOG	8

BIG 5 ANALYSIS: DECEMBER 2016

DATE	LION		LEOPARD		ELEPHANT				BUFFALO			
	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS
					LH	H	INDIV.		LH	H	INDIV.	
1	12	3	2	2		2	1	3		1	3	2
2	5	3	4	2		1	2	2		1		1
3	6	3	4	2		2		2		2		2
4	11	2	1	1	1	1	2	3		1		1
5	9	1				1	3	3	1		3	2
6	16	3	3	2		1		1			5	1
7	12	4	2	2		3	1	4		3	3	4
8	16	4	4	2		6	1	7			4	3
9	11	2	3	3	1	1		2			6	2
10	9	1	1	1		2		2		1		1
11	9	1	1	1	1		2	2		1	1	2
12	19	5	3	3	1		1	2	1			1
13	1	1	1	1	1	1		2			4	1
14	15	3	1	1	1		5	2			3	1
15	**	2	5	3		1	3	2		1	8	3
16	12	4	1	1		4		4			2	1
17	13	5	1	1		4		4			5	1
18	7	1	3	3		1		1			5	1
19	25	6	1	1		8		8			6	3
20	11	4	3	2	2	2		4			1	1
21	10	3	4	2	3			3			2	1
22	8	3	6	4	1	1		2			10	2
23	20	6	4	4		5	1	7			3	1
24	11	4	1	1	1			1	1			1
25	14	3	7	5		4		4		3		3
26	14	2	2	2		1	1	2	1	1		2
27	21	3	1	1	1	2	1	4		3		3
28	11	4	3	1	1		1	2		2	9	4
29	11	3	1	1		1	1	2			1	1
30	4	1	3	3		8		8			2	1
31	13	3	5	4		1	2	2			3	1
TOTAL	356	93	81	62	15	64	28	97	4	20	89	54