

MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – FEBRUARY 2014

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

WEATHER SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 2014

Maximum temperature (°C)	36
Minimum temperature (°C)	19
Mean maximum (°C)	32
Mean minimum (°C)	22
Rainfall (mm)	43
Days of rain	8

*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF FEBRUARY 2014

LIONS

STYX PRIDE = UNKNOWN NUMBER

1 ADULT FEMALE	11 YEARS 1 MONTH
1 ADULT FEMALE	6 YEARS 1 MONTH
2 FEMALE SUB ADULTS	3 YEARS 1 MONTH
2 MALE SUB ADULTS	3 YEARS 1 MONTH
3 CUBS	+/- 3 ½ MONTHS
UNKNOWN NUMBER OF CUBS	

MALAMALA, EYREFIELD
(16 sightings)

There were sixteen sightings of the Styx Pride during February. The majority of the sightings were in northern Eyrefield, with sightings normally consisting of a few members and not the entire pride. The two oldest lionesses and the three cubs were viewed more regularly than the sub-adults. The cubs are maturing well and we look forward to when the younger lioness reveals her cubs to us. We are not too sure of the number of cubs she has, and looks to be keeping them just north of our boundary in the Mlowathi River. The cubs are under threat from a number of males and prides bordering on their territory. The Fourways Pride has been spending time in their territory and could pose a dilemma if they were to encounter the cubs. The Manyeathi Males would also not tolerate these youngsters although they have been pre-occupied looking after the Marthly and Marthly-Breakaway Pride's new litters to their south. They also face a threat from a coalition in the north consisting of six large males.

We found the pride around eastern side Mlowathi on the 8th with an adult female giraffe kill. The entire fed off of the carcass for three days before they went back west towards Mlowathi Dam and then north into Gowrie.

The sub-adults are reaching a critical age now. There is no doubt that the males will have to leave shortly, there is too much competition for them in their current area, whether their sisters will go with them is another factor. They must stay to grow the Pride but with the current situation with the new cubs, they could look to join their brothers when they move off.

EYREFIELD PRIDE = 8

2 ADULT FEMALES	6 YEARS 8 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	6 YEARS 7 MONTHS
2 SUB-ADULT MALES	2 YEARS
1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE	2 YEARS
1 SUB-ADULT MALE	1 YEAR 9 MONTHS
1 SUB-ADULT MALE	1 YEAR 6 MONTHS
MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD (2 sightings)	

There were just two sightings of the Eyrefield Pride in February. It is typical for them to spend more time west of our boundaries during the wetter winter months. They Marthly-Breakaway Pride seems to have shifted more north-west opening up territory for the Eyrefield Pride to occupy. They were seen once on Campbell Rd and once on the airstrip. The sub-adults are developing well and will soon add considerable strength for the pride, aiding in hunting scenarios and providing protection against neighbouring prides.

FOURWAYS PRIDE = 3

1 ADULT FEMALE	UNKNOWN AGE
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 8 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	3 YEARS 8 MONTHS

EASTERN MALAMALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN FLOCKFIELD,
EASTERN CHARLESTON
(16 sightings)

There were sixteen sightings of the Fourways Pride in February. Nine of the sightings were of the three members as well as the two nomadic male's in the pride mostly in north-eastern Eyrefield. They killed an adult female buffalo on Reedbuck Rd on the 7th and remained with the kill for four days before heading back west towards Wild Dog Rocks Open Area. They moved around that area for a while and camped around Inyathi Rd for four days feeding off an elephant carcass that had died of natural causes. It was good to spend more time with this pride this month and watch how the interaction of the pride members is developing. The males are developing into large lions and cause possibly pose a threat to coalitions in the area in the future.

We havnt seen the other adult lioness with the pride for over four months now and so we believe that she most probably died somewhere to our east. Her disappearance will remain a mystery to us.

MARTHLY PRIDE = 7

2 ADULT FEMALES	11 YEARS 6 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALES	2 YEARS 10 MONTHS
4 CUBS	±8 MONTHS
MARTHLY (4 sightings)	

There were four sightings of the Marthly Pride in February. They were seen once with two of the Manyelethi Males on Euphorbia Dr on the 21st. We believe that the tailless lioness is pregnant and could have given birth sometime during the month. She would be keeping them west of our boundary possibly in the Manyelethi or Sand Rivers. Reports indicate that all four cubs are healthy and developing well. The

lionesses have been heard roaring quite frequently and we believe that they are putting pressure on their relatives in the Marthly –Breakaway Pride, pushing them further west and providing a haven for their cubs to develop. The Manyelethi Males have been spending most of their time with these two prides. The two lionesses were seen with the cubs on two occasion and on their own once. The sub-adult lioness was seen once with the pride. She is slowly gaining acceptance from the Manyelethi Males, and the presence of these Males could lead her to temporarily leave the pride to avoid abuse.

CHARLESTON PRIDE = 3

1 ADULT FEMALE	9 YEARS 2 MONTHS
2 SUB ADULT MALES	2 YEARS 10 MONTHS
CHARLESTON	
(1 sighting)	

There was one sighting of the Charleston Pride in February. They were found in the Sand River south of Charleston North crossing. The lions are in great condition and the males continue to thrive under the guidance of their aunt. Reports indicate that they have been spending most of their time wondering throughout their very large territory and we wait to see if any other prides pose a threat to their land. There were other lions seen within their territory throughout the months and they might need to have to defend themselves if they are to remain dominant over this large area. The Selati Pride have split to their south and this could improve their chances of success if the breakaway lions were to move far away from Charleston.

MANYELETHI MALES = 4	± 9 YEARS 7 MONTHS
MARTHLY, EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON	
DOMINANT OVER THE EYREFIELD, MARTHLY AND BREAKAWAY MARTHLY PRIDES	
(1 sighting)	

There was just a single sighting of the Manyelethi Males in February. The dark-maned and hip-scarred Male were seen in Marthly with the two Marthly lionesses and cubs. Reports indicate that they have been having run-ins with the coalition of three males to their west (Selati Males) as well as the Marthly and Eyrefield Male. The dark-maned male is looking less conditioned after these brawls. They are providing good protection for the Marthly and Marthly-Breakaway Prides and the cubs in these prides seem to be thriving under their control.

Other lions encountered: (3 sightings)

- **The Break- Away Marthly Pride (0 sightings)**

There were no sightings of this pride during February. We believe that they are spending most of their time to our west and are receiving pressure from the Marthly and Eyrefield Prides. Reports indicate that the nine cubs are in great shape and that the Manyelethi Males have been spending a lot of time with them.

- **Selati Pride (0 sightings)**

There were no sightings of the Selati Pride in February. We have heard from our neighbours to the south

of a lionesses giving birth to new cubs last month. Their movements are fairly erratic and the pride has apparently split with six lionesses moving very far south-east from the rest of the pride. The single Kruger Male lion still seems to have dominance over a portion of this pride but he is receiving tough competition from two other coalitions, time will tell whether he is able to maintain his reign over this pride.

- **3 young male lions in South Western Charleston** (0 sighting)

There were no sightings of these males during February.

- **9 sub-adult lions seen in Flockfield during February 2014.** (1 sighting)

There was a pride of 9 sub-adult lions seen on Flockfield during February. These might have been juveniles from the Selati Pride but we cannot confirm. They were seen at night and so little was known about the composition of the lions. The Selati Pride was experiencing a split and this could have chased the sub-adults north onto our property.

- **2 young male lions with Fourways Pride** (9 sightings)

These two young male lions were seen with the Fourways Pride on nine occasions in February. The larger of these two males has bigger mane and a large scar on his back. The younger has a very blonde mane and a mature looking face for his size. All nine sightings of them was in the company of the Fourways Pride and it seems that the pride has adopted them as their own. They fed off an elephant carcass on Nyathi Rd for four days in the company of the Fourways Pride.

- **3 adult male lions in Charleston** (0 sighting)

There were no sightings of these adult male lions in February. We believe that they spend most of their time in the south-western parts of the Sabi Sands and are competing with the Kruger Male for dominance over the Selati Pride.

- **1 Male Lion seen with the Styx Pride** (0 sighting)

One male lion between 5 and 7 years old was found with the Styx Pride on one occasion in November, but there were no confirmed sightings of him during February. He was seen mating with the Styx lionesses last year and we assume that the new Styx cubs have been sired by him.

- **A pride of 9 lions seen in Flockfield during winter 2013.** (1 sighting)

This pride was seen again in February in Flockfield. We believe them to be a pride our southern neighbours call the Eastern Bank Pride. The pride consists of 2 lionesses with one sub-adult female and 6 sub-adult males that seem to be around 2-2 ½ years old. We will see if they decide to spend more time on MalaMala.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LIONS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

FEBRUARY	52
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LEOPARDS

BICYCLE CROSSING MALE

12 YEARS 1 MONTH

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

There were six confirmed sightings of the Bicycle Crossing Male in February. All of the sightings of this male were in western Flockfield and MalaMala. He is still in great condition and continues to show his dominance throughout his large territory that expands south from Rattray's Camp towards the Charleston/Toulon Boundary in the very southern parts of MalaMala. He was seen with an unidentified female as well as the Treehouse Male in the presence of an impala kill around Styx Crossing. He also was seen fighting with the Treehouse Male on the first day of the month around lower Kapen Crossing. The older male came out on top and we wonder whether the Treehouse Male will continue to challenge this male for territory after a number of hostile interactions.

AIRSTRIP MALE

7 YEARS 8 MONTHS

MALAMALA, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY
(7 sightings)

There were seven confirmed sightings of the Airstrip Male in February. We are unsure that his left eye will eventually heal but he is still healthy despite this minor setback and continues to display dominance as he patrols his large territory north of the Matshapiri River. He is receiving territorial pressure from the older, larger Marthly Male to his west but encounters are few and far between to our knowledge. He was seen mating with the Ostrich Koppies Female around Campbell Koppies on the 8th. This could be a ploy by the female to keep the male away from her potential cubs. He continues to protect the Kikilezi Female's cubs and was heard roaring a number of times throughout the month around the female's den site, ensuring no rogue males can eliminate his progeny.

PRINCESS ALICE PANS MALE

13 YEARS 2 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA
(11 sightings)

There were eleven confirmed sightings of the Princess Alice Pans Male during February. He is looking very well and continues to dominate the other leopards within his territory. Most of his sightings were around the Old Airstrip and Princess Alice Pans. He is tolerant of the submissive Newington Male for the time being although the younger male is tending to cross east through the Sand River more regularly now.

MARTHLY MALE

± 12 ½ YEARS

MALAMALA, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY
(0 sightings)

There were no sightings of the Marthly Male during February. We believe that he is spending most of his time to our north-west.

CHARLESTON MALE**7 YEARS 8 MONTHS**EASTERN CHARLESTON, NORTHERN TOULON
(1 sighting)

Another sighting of the Charleston Male in February. It is good to see this male spending more time north of the Sand River. He is looking well and has little competition that we know of besides the Bicycle Crossing Male, who spends most of his time to his north and west. He was seen on River Rd close to Charleston Drive.

WEST STREET MALE**4 YEARS 9 MONTHS**MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD
(0 sightings)

There were no sightings of the West Street Male during February. He is still a young leopard and could be spending time exploring new areas looking to set up a territory. We still believe that he will return closer to the Sand River and West Street bridge as the summer rains begin to die down.

NEWINGTON MALE**5 YEARS 4 MONTHS**WESTERN MALAMALA
(9 sightings)

There were nine confirmed sightings of the Newington Male during January. He was seen on six occasions on the eastern bank of the Sand River. This could have pushed the West Street Male further east from the river. He is a big male like his father and should be able to establish a legacy on MalaMala in the future. He remains fairly submissive towards his father, the Princess Alice Pans Male, and could be looking to take over from his father once his time passes or the opportunity presents itself.

TREEHOUSE MALE**+/- 3 ½ YEARS**WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD
(2 sightings)

This newly named leopard is slowly becoming a regular on MalaMala. He was seen on two occasions in February. He was seen on the first day of the month fighting with the Bicycle Crossing Male around Lower Kapen Crossing. The older male looked the dominant one in the tussle but little injuries were received by either side. This type of interaction could be happening more regularly than we believe. He was seen a bit scratched again later on in the month, possibly by another run-in with the Bicycle Crossing Male.

RIVER ROCKS MALE**4 YEARS 4 MONTHS**WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON
(4 sightings)

The River Rocks Male was seen on four occasions in February. Most of the sightings were around Charleston North Crossing proof that he is still spending most of his time within the perimeters of his dominant father's territory. No animosity has been recorded between the two leopards yet but we believe that its only a matter of time before he will move off in search of new territory. He is looking well and

bears a striking resemblance to that of his older brother; the Airstrip Male.

TSLEBE ROCKS MALE **± 8 YEARS**
NORTHERN EYREFIELD
(1 sighting)

Another sighting of the Tslebe Rocks Male in February. He was seen in the Mlowathi River just south of the Gowrie Boundary. He is dominant to our north and we believe these to be visits to the extremities of his territory. He could also pose a threat to the new Styx cubs as they share territory.

GOWRIE MALE **± 6/7 YEARS**
NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD
(0 sightings)

There were no sightings of the Gowrie Male in January.

KIKILEZI FEMALE **12 YEARS 5 MONTHS**
2 CUBS **+/- 3 MONTHS**
WESTERN MALAMALA, MARTHLY
(5 sightings of female alone, 14 sighting of female and cubs, 4 sightings of cubs alone)

An incredible month for the Kikilezi female. She was seen nineteen times, and her cubs on eighteen occasions throughout February. The two cubs look to be a male and a female and are slowly getting more accustomed to the Land Rovers. The male cub does seem slightly nervous still and the female more bold and curious. She has used multiple den sites all around the Lower Mlowathi. She moved them from Mlowathi Koppies early in the month and used the large rocks in the Mlowathi River south of Lower Mlowathi Crossing as a den for a while. Towards the end of the month she kept them hidden just east of the Quarry as she hunted. She killed an impala around NFB S. Freds Tree on the 22nd and returned back to the den to fetch the cubs and bring them to the kill. They fed on the carcass for the day and returned back to the Mlowathi River later that evening. On the 27th we found an impala carcass in a Marula by Campbell Koppies, she was found in the vicinity of the kill later on that day. There was no sign of the cubs at the kill. We also watched her bump into the Airstrip Male on her way back to the den site. Little animosity was shown between the two leopards and the Airstrip Male slowly walked behind her and roared numerous times, a good sign for the longevity of the cubs.

TAMBOTI FEMALE **6 YEARS 4 MONTHS**
1 CUB (FEMALE) **1 YEAR**
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA
(0 sightings of female alone, 6 sightings of female and cub, 2 sightings of cub alone)

More excellent viewing of the Tamboti Female and her captivating cub throughout February. The young female cub has reached the critical year mark and is now in her stages of fine tuning her skills as she looks to become an independent leopard, she was seen twice on her own in February. All of the sightings of these two leopards were on the western bank of the Sand River. The Tamboti Female continues to impress us with her first attempt at motherhood.

MLOWATHI FEMALE
NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD
(0 sighting)

7 YEARS

There were no confirmed sighting of the Mlowathi Female during February.

JAKKALSDRAAI FEMALE
CENTRAL & WESTERN CHARLESTON, EAST OF THE SAND RIVER
(1 sightings)

14 YEARS 3 MONTHS

There was one confirmed sighting of the Jakkalsdraai Female in February. Rangers weren't able to see if she was showing any signs of pregnancy or suckle marks. Her courtship with the River Rocks Male could have proven unsuccessful. She is still in great shape and we hope to see more of her in the following months. She was seen on the northern parts of Sibuye Drive on the 9th.

OSTRICH KOPPIES FEMALE
EYREFIELD
(5 sightings)

9 YEARS 4 MONTHS

There were five confirmed sightings of the Ostrich Koppies Female in February, a good increase from last months single sighting. She was seen mating with the Airstrip Male on the 19th close to Campbell Koppies. This could be a ploy to distract him from her possible new litter as she was seen lactating early on in the month. The cubs could also have been killed. There is lots of lion activity in her territory with both the Styx Pride and the Fourways Pride spending time there. She was seen around Matshapiri Dam on two occasions and could be putting pressure on the Matshapiri Female for land.

MATSHIPIRI FEMALE
EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD
(0 sightings)

13 YEARS 5 MONTHS

There were no confirmed sighting of the Matshapiri Female in February.

DUDLEY FEMALE
1 FEMALE CUB
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD

15 YEARS 5 MONTHS

1 YEAR 11 MONTHS

(0 sightings of female, 0 sighting of female and cub, 1 sighting of cub without female)

There was one sighting of the cub of the Dudley Female in February. She was seen in south western Flockfield. The female cub is almost two years now and we believe that she is now an independent leopard. Her mother was not seen this month and we think that she spends most of her time to our west with the occasional visit to the eastern bank of the Sand River. She could look to start mating again now that her cub is independent. The most likely male to mate with her would be the Bicycle Crossing Male or possibly the Treehouse Male.

FLOCKFIELD FEMALE**9 YEARS 10 MONTHS**CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Flockfield Female during February, although there was a female leopard found at Styx Crossing on the 19th. The leopard looks younger than her and could have possibly been her female cub that we havnt seen for over a year now. She would be 2 ½ years old now.

THE EMSAGWENI FEMALE**4 YEARS 2 MONTHS**WESTERN MALAMALA
(3 sightings)

There were three confirmed sightings of the Emsagweni Female in February. She is spending more time now along the lower reaches of the Matshapiri and could be looking to stamp her mark on that particular area in the future. There is little competition for her there and could be ideal for her to have as a territory. She is looking well and should be seeking out males to mate with in the near future.

CALABASH FEMALE**± 6.5 YEARS****1 CUB** (Potentially more than 1 cub)**1 YEAR**

WESTERN CHARLESTON

(0 sightings, 0 sightings of cub without female, 0 sightings of female with cub)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Calabash Female in February.

TOULON FEMALE**2 YEARS 8 MONTHS**CHARLESTON, TOULON
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Toulon Female in February although there were two young female leopards seen in southern Charleston that could have been her. Rangers were not able to give a proper ID because of the nature of the sightings.

Other leopards encountered:• **SHAWS FEMALE****+/- 18 YEARS**

(0 sightings)

There were no sightings of this old female in February. We believe that she spends most of her time west of our boundaries.

• **DAUGHTER OF THE MATSHAPIRI FEMALE****2 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

(0 sightings)

There were no sightings of the Daughter of the Matshapiri Female in February. She hasn't been seen in a few months and could be exploring new area outside of MalaMala.

- **No ID females:**
(5 sightings in total)

There were five No ID female leopard sightings during February. Two were on the western bank, probably young females from the west exploring new territory. There were two sightings in southern Charleston, most probably the Toulon Female or Calabash Female. The other sighting was at Styx Crossing and could possibly have been the daughter of the Flockfield Female who we haven't seen in 12 months

- **No ID males:**
(7 sightings).

There were seven unidentified male leopards in February. The most interesting was a male that was seen mating with the Ostrich Koppies Female at Emsagwen Waterhole on the 18th. He was seen the next day on Emsagwen. There were also no ID males found at the windmill and in the Mlowathi River close to the Gowrie Boundary. Other sightings were too brief to ID the leopards and were most probably dominant males in the area.

- **No ID (gender and identity unconfirmed):** (1 sighting)
- **NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)**

FEBRUARY	22
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CHEETAH (1 sighting)

There was just a single sighting of a male cheetah at Clarendon throughout February. This is a young male that we seem mostly in north-eastern Eyrefield. We believe that he spends most of his time in the KNP. He was seen on the 7th. We did not see or hear from the female and her two sub-adults. They must be spending most of their time east of us in the KNP.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED

FEBRUARY	1
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS (0 sightings)

There were no Cape Hunting Dog sightings in February. We believe that the pack of eight and the pack of thirteen spend most of the month in the western parts of the Sabi Sands.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

FEBRUARY	0
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

February brought less rain than expected. The water is still fairly spread out and thus the herds of elephant too. The elephant herds are at their regular small sizes for this time of year with multiple herds occasionally joining up to drink or cool down at various water sources throughout the property. The hot summer days are evident as we view herds of elephant running, jubilantly, to pans and rivers to cool down as the sun begins to lash out its powerful rays. There is a female elephant with a large proportion of her trunk missing that we see occasionally opposite main camp. She struggles to drink and breathe. There was also a young bull elephant that broke his leg in an accident somewhere on the property. He was put down on Nyathi Rd and the Fourways Pride fed off the carcass for four days. There were many hyenas in the area as well.

The buffalo herds have been viewed quite regularly, mostly in the northern parts of the property. Herds of up to 300 have been seen around Tsebe Rocks and along the Mlowathi River. There were also two separate herds seen on a day on a number of occasions. The hot days mean that the buffalo are remaining close to water sources and their daily movements are less than that of a cooler winter's day. The larger variety in water sources mean that the buffalo herds are more widespread throughout the property. We have been seeing smaller herds of about 80 animals in Eyrefield and MalaMala.

OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

Civet: 6

Porcupine: 2

TOTAL SIGHTINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2014

Lion: 44

Leopard: 91

Elephant: 110

Buffalo: 63

Cheetah: 1

Cape Hunting Dogs: 0

