

A close-up, high-angle shot of a lemur's face, showing its large, expressive eyes and the texture of its fur. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

# FEBRUARY

## 2017 GAME REPORT



**MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – FEBRUARY 2017**

AREAS COVERED: MARTHLY / EYREFIELD / MALAMALA / FLOCKFIELD / CHARLESTON  
**WEATHER SUMMARY – FEBRUARY**

| <b>FEBRUARY WEATHER SUMMARY</b> |        |         |                 |              |         |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------------|--------------|---------|
| <i>TEMPERATURE</i>              |        |         |                 |              |         |
| Celsius (°C)                    |        |         | Fahrenheit (°F) |              |         |
|                                 | Actual | Average |                 | Actual       | Average |
| Maximum                         | 30     | 29.8    | Maximum         | 86           | 85.6    |
| Minimum                         | 23     | 22.5    | Minimum         | 73.4         | 72.5    |
| <i>RAINFALL</i>                 |        |         |                 |              |         |
| Millimeters                     |        | Inches  |                 | Days of rain |         |
| 116                             |        | 4.56    |                 | 6            |         |

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF FEBRUARY 2017

**LIONS**

**STYX PRIDE = 5**

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>  | <b>14 YEARS 1 MONTH</b> |
| <b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>  | <b>9 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>  |
| <b>1 ADULT FEMALES</b> | <b>6 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>  |
| <b>2 ADULT MALES</b>   | <b>5 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>  |
| <b>2 CUBS</b>          | <b>±5 MONTHS</b>        |
| <b>(4 sightings)</b>   |                         |

**NORTHERN EYREFIELD**

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

Members of the Styx pride were viewed on four occasions in the month of February; all of the sightings were concentrated in northern Eyrefield near Mlowati dam. A single female was seen around Mlowati dam on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The same female was viewed again on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, on the Gowrie boundary in the company of one of the Gowrie male lions. The following day they were joined by the other two females and the two young cubs on a wildebeest kill at Mlowati dam. They remained with the kill for a second day before moving back north.

**EYREFIELD PRIDE = 10**

|                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>    | <b>9 YEARS 7 MONTHS</b>  |
| <b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>   | <b>4 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b> |
| <b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b> | <b>4 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b> |
| <b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>   | <b>4 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>  |
| <b>1 SUB-ADULT MALE</b>   | <b>4 YEARS 5 MONTHS</b>  |
| <b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>       | <b>1 YEAR 2 MONTHS</b>   |
| <b>1 MALE CUB</b>         | <b>1 YEAR 2 MONTHS</b>   |
| <b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>       | <b>1 YEAR 1 MONTH</b>    |
| <b>1 MALE CUB</b>         | <b>1 YEAR 1 MONTH</b>    |

**MALA MALA, FLOCKFIELD**

(9 sightings)

The Eyrefield Pride was seen on nine days in February. Have been spending increasing amounts of time in the west, possibly due to the presence of the Marthly Breakaway lionesses. The Eyrefield Pride were also not seen with the Matshipri males this month which could also be a contributing factor to the sporadic nature of distribution of their sightings. The females have done very well to sustain the pride; the cubs have been looking strong after surpassing their one-year mark. They are becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish from the females as they progress from cubs to sub adults.

The Eyrefield Pride were first encountered in central Flockfield on the 2nd, it wasn't until a week later that they were seen at confluence crossing. This trend continued, as it was another four days before they were seen again. They were seen feeding on the remains of an Impala at Flockfield tower on the evening of the 12th and were seen the following day at West Street bridge, were they remained for two days. The following day they were seen outside the gate to Rattarays Camp and then they moved off west again for another week.

The Eyrefield Pride appeared again on the property on the 21st near Dudley Crossing and started to walk north. They were located the following day quite far north of West Street were they settled for one additional day and then crossed back west for the remained if the month.

**FOURWAYS PRIDE = 6**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**  
**1 SUB ADULT FEMALE**  
**2 MALE CUBS**  
**2 FEMALE CUBS**  
EASTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(2 sightings)

**UNKNOWN AGE**  
**6 YEARS 7 MONTHS**  
**1 YEAR 2 MONTHS**  
**1 YEAR 2 MONTHS**

The Fourways Pride was only viewed on two occasions in February. And as with the Eyrefield Pride, the month was spent devoid of the presence of the two Matshipri males. The two females and their four sub-adult offspring were seen on the 1st at Paddy's pools. It wasn't until the 20th that they were seen again, this time further south on the MalaMala Flockfield boundary.

**MARTHLY PRIDE = 11**

**2 ADULT FEMALES**  
**1 ADULT FEMALE**  
**3 SUB-ADULT MALES**  
**1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE**  
**2 CUBS**  
**3 CUBS**  
MARTHLY, MALAMALA

**14 YEARS 5 MONTHS**  
**5 YEARS 6 MONTHS**  
**3 YEARS 7 MONTHS**  
**3 YEARS 7 MONTHS**  
**±8 MONTHS**  
**±7 MONTHS**

(4 sightings)

With the Sand River flowing strong for the entire duration of February, it once again limited the presence of the Marthly Pride. There was also a notable absence of the tailless lioness once again, this could potentially have something to do with the fact that she was seen mating with the Clarendon males a few weeks earlier, only time will confirm these suspicions.

As with the Eyrefield and Fourways prides there was no sign of the dominant males (The Clarendon males) with the pride. The two females and five cubs were first located in the southern reaches of the Mlowati River on the 8th. It wasn't until the 22nd that they were located again, to the west of Stwise. They remained in the general area until the 25th when they left the property for the remainder of the month.

**CHARLESTON PRIDE = 5**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**  
**2 ADULT MALES**  
**2 MALE CUBS**  
CHARLESTON

**12 YEARS**  
**5 YEARS 8 MONTHS**  
**± 1 YEAR 10 MONTHS**

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

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**MATSHAPIRI PRIDE = 3**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±6 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**

**±4 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

DOMINANT OVER THE EYREFIELD AND FOURWAYS PRIDES

*First encounter: April 2015*

(10 sightings)

The two Matshipri males spent the entire month in the presence of the Marthly Breakaway Pride. Since winning over the affections of the six females in January, the two males granted them their complete and undivided attention. The two males were seen with the females on seven out of the ten occasions with members of the six young Breakaway females.

The two males and the females moved regularly between the eastern and western banks of the Sand River, never crossing over man made structures such as the causeway and West Street bridge. We witnessed many interesting water crossings, with the lions showing the same instinctive distain for water not too dissimilar to any domestic house cat.

The first encounter with members of this coalition was on at the parking bay on the 2nd whereby one of the males was seen in the company of three of the Breakaway lionesses. He reunited with his brother and two other breakaway lionesses and moved east to the Ngoboswan donga where they made an Impala kill. A week later the darker maimed male was seen mating with one of the breakaway lionesses at the airstrip.

Two days later the darker maimed male was at Piccadilly Pans with two lionesses while his brother was near Matshipri open area with the remainder of the lionesses. The darker manned male remained in the vicinity of Campbell Koppies for another day. Before joining up with his brother and the six females on the western boundary. On the 16th both male were back at Campbell Koppies, they were viewed there for a day before disappearing until the end of the month where they were witnessed periodically mating with members of the Marthly Breakaway Pride.

**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 6 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**CLARENDON MALES = 2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±12 YEARS 1 MONTH**

MARTHLY, NORTHERN MALAMALA

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**GOWRIE MALES = 5**

**1 ADULT MALE**

**± 6 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

**1 ADULT MALE**

**DECEASED**

**3 ADULT MALES**

**± 5 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD, MALAMALA - DOMINANT OVER THE STYX PRIDE

*First encounter: September 2015*

*\* Note; one of the males (5 years and 11months) died in April 2016 from a suspected snakebite. He will no longer be included in future reports.*

(9 sightings)

Representatives from the Gowrie male lion coalition were seen on nine occasions in February. Three of the powerful young males were first seen at Clarendon dam on the 8th. They spent the better part of the day sleeping at the dam then continued north off the property. The following day the light manned male was seen in the company of the Styx Pride at Mlowati dam.

It was until the 18th before one of the males was seen; once again the light manned male was with the Styx Pride. This time they were further east, where the Matshipri River crosses the Gowrie boundary. The sighting only lasted an afternoon and the lions all moved north. The majority of the sightings of the Gowrie males were in the last week of February. Two of the males were seen at Clarendon dam on the 20th, one of these male then joined up with the Styx pride north of Mlowati dam a day later.

Three of the males regrouped at Mlowati dam on the 25th, they then began pushing south and east to Fourways open area where evidence suggests that they made a kill. On the 28th we were treated to a rare sighting of all four male lions together on the Gowrie boundary, east of the Mlowati River.

**Other Lions Encountered;**

- **Marthly break-away pride:** 13 sightings

Once again the month belonged to the six females from the Marthly Breakaway pride. There is never a shortage of action and drama when these females are around. For the first time since December when the cubs were initially discovered, two young cubs emerged from Campbell Koppies to join their mother on a kudu kill at Piccadilly triangle. The cubs were seen once again the following day at Campbell Koppies. However, a few days later the six females were all seen together near the airstrip. Which was also the first time all six lionesses had been together since the cubs were born. Ominously, the cubs were not seen again. The Matshipri male lions continued to spend all their time with the breakaway lionesses and were seen mating regularly around the airstrip.

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

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>37</b> |
|-----------------|-----------|

**LEOPARDS:**

**BICYCLE CROSSING MALE** **15YEARS**  
WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**WEST STREET MALE** **7 YEARS 10 MONTHS**  
CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**TREEHOUSE MALE****± 7 YEARS 2 MONTHS**WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, MARTHLY  
(3 sightings)

There were three sightings of the Treehouse male leopard. He continues to be an elusive leopard within his own stomping ground as he continued to cover the vast swathe that is his territory. All three of the sightings of this male leopard were west of the Sand River. The presence of the Marthly Breakaway Pride enough to deter any leopard from crossing over the Sand River in central Mala Mala.

**TSLEBE ROCKS MALE****± 10 YEARS 8 MONTHS**NORTHERN EYREFIELD  
(1 sighting)

There was one sighting of this male leopard in February. He was seen at Tslebe Rocks on the 3rd, the first sighting of this male leopard in several months.

**ACCIPITER MALE****± 6 YEARS 6 MONTHS**MALAMALA  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**SPLIT ROCK MALE****2 YEARS 8 MONTHS**EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD  
*Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, independent latter half of 2015*  
(6 sightings)

There were six sightings of this young male leopard in February. He continues to patrol the Matshipri River and walk deep into eastern Flockfield. This awkwardly built, adolescent male leopard has been hard at work carving out a piece of territory among the three dominant male leopards who control Mala Mala and Flockfield, namely the Treehouse male, Accipeter male and the Bicycle Crossing male leopards. However difficult the task of escape and evasion is, the Split Rock male wisely chooses his battles and makes himself very scarce whenever any of his superiors are present.

He was regularly seen walking along the Matshipri river, hunting Impala and scrub hare whenever possible. Although the preferred prey being any mammal, in the life of a subordinate young male leopard any morsel will do, and tortoises often make an easy meal. With the ever-aging Bicycle crossing male leopard showing the scars of fifteen years and the Accipiter male and Treehouse male leopards becoming



ever more scarce, there remains some hope that this beautiful, inquisitive male leopard may find a suitable spot to settle down.

**KIKILEZI FEMALE**

**15 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

**1 MALE CUB**

**10 MONTHS**

**1 FEMALE CUB**

**10 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

(0 sighting of female, 0 sightings of the cubs, 0 sightings of female and cubs)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period

**PICADILLY FEMALE**

**3 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(6 sightings)

The Piccadilly female continued to be a regular occurrence in the area that earned her namesake. She was seen on four occasions in the area around Piccadilly triangle. This area is well known for having large herds of Impala in the evenings. This makes it very ideal for a young female leopard wanting to carve out a small piece of territory in one of the most densely populated leopard habitats in the world.

She was also seen patrolling the southern reaches of the Mlowati River, an area that was regularly frequented by her mother in earlier years. The young leopardess has since then, completely displaced her mother and taken full control of this area. The Piccadilly female moves around her small territory frequently and is rarely seen in the same place twice, ideal behavior to avoid the unwanted attentions of hyena and lions.

**SIBUYE FEMALE**

**3 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(1 sighting)

There was only a single sighting of the Sibuye female leopard. The young leopardess remains ever more elusive in her nature. But she was seen looking strong and healthy walking around Mlowati Pans on the 15th.

**TAMBOTI FEMALE**

**9 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA  
(1 sighting)

The Tamboti female leopard was only seen on one occasion in February. She was seen in the vicinity of one her old den sites on the 14th. She didn't appear to be pregnant however her regularly mating sessions with the Treehouse male leopard could suggest that she may be searching for a den.

**ISLAND FEMALE**

**3 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA  
*Daughter of the Tamboti female, independent first quarter of 2015*  
(10 sightings)

There were ten sightings of the Island female leopard in February. After receiving our first introduction to her male cub in January, the Island female was seen on another eight occasions with her cub. After making use of the Ngoboswaan as a den site towards the beginning of the month, heaving rains forced her to move. She crossed the strong flowing Sand River and made use of a new den site near Maxim's lookout.

On the two other occasions the Island female was viewed (without her cub), she was viewed feeding on an Impala carcass near the old airstrip. She continues to strive as a first time mother, making regular kills and move her cub clear of the attention of other predators.

**MLOWATHI FEMALE**

**10 YEARS 1 MONTH**

**DAUGHTER OF THE MLOWATHI FEMALE**

**±4 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**MATSHIPIRI FEMALE**

**16 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

EASTERN MALAMALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**EMSAGWENI FEMALE**

**7 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

MALAMALA

(2 sightings)

There were two sightings of the Emsagweni female leopard in February. She has become increasingly elusive since injuring her eye last year. However her eye has healed well and she is looking much better.

**FLOCKFIELD FEMALE**

**12 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**LOOKOUT FEMALE**

**6 YEARS 3 MONTH**

**MALE CUB**

**1 YEAR 3 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:** (3 sightings, 3 individuals)
  - There were three sightings of three different unidentified male leopards during February:
    - An unidentified male leopard was seen on the 1st on the east bank of the Matshipri River near Drum crossing.
    - A no ID male leopard was viewed in the southern parts of the Tamboti Thicket on the 21st
    - The Mambiri male leopard was at Flockfield lookout on the 27th.
- **Females:** (3 sightings, 3 individuals)
  - There were three sightings of three separate unidentified female leopards in February:
    - There was an unidentified female at Flockfield tower in the company of the Treehouse male on the 21st.
    - A female leopard was seen at Emsagwen crossing on the 21st.
    - The Teardrop female was viewed on two occasions at her den site at Flatrocks in Toulon. Both cubs were present on both occasions.

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

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>17</b> |
|-----------------|-----------|

**CHEETAH**

There were four sightings of the two Cheetah brothers in February. The two brothers are still separate after a month of being apart however they are slowly moving closer to each other. The one male remains in the area around Clarendon and the other male was viewed at Mlowati dam.

**NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED**

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>2</b> |
|-----------------|----------|

**CAPE HUNTING DOGS**

There were three super packs of Cape Hunting Dogs seen on the property in February. A pack of 16 were seen on four occasions towards the end of the month in the central parts of MalaMala. They were last viewed in the central parts of Charleston.

The other two packs of three were seen on one occasion in respectively. They were located in northern Eyrefield and northern parts of Marthly.

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

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>22</b> |
|-----------------|-----------|

**CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS**

There was another reduction in large herbivore sightings in February. There were 97 elephant sightings, of which; 9 were large herds, 56 were medium to small herds and 32 were individual bulls. Of the 39 buffalo sightings; 3 consisted of large herds (larger than 200 individuals), 12 consisted of small herds and 24 were individual bulls or bachelor herds of 'dagga boys'.

**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 porcupine sightings.

| <b>TOTAL SIGHTINGS: FEBRUARY 2017</b> |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>LION</b>                           | <b>45</b> |
| <b>LEOPARD</b>                        | <b>41</b> |
| <b>ELEPHANT</b>                       | <b>97</b> |
| <b>BUFFALO</b>                        | <b>39</b> |
| <b>CHEETAH</b>                        | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>CAPE HUNTING DOG</b>               | <b>6</b>  |