

## MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – DECEMBER 2013

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

### WEATHER SUMMARY –NOVEMBER

Maximum temperature (°C)	38
Minimum temperature (°C)	18
Mean maximum (°C)	29
Mean minimum (°C)	19
Rainfall (mm)	188.5
Days of rain	13

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF DECEMBER 2013

### LIONS

#### STYX PRIDE = 6

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>10 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>5 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 FEMALE SUB ADULTS</b>	<b>2 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 MALE SUB ADULTS</b>	<b>2 YEARS 11 MONTHS</b>

MARTHLY, MALAMALA, EYREFIELD  
(7 sightings)

There were seven confirmed sightings of the Styx Pride during December. Once again their movements were erratic in the sense that most sightings saw the members apart and in separate areas. The sub adults were seen on their own on three occasions and with the lionesses four times.

One of the lionesses is lactating and showing signs of suckle marks suggesting that she has cubs. We suspect that she is keeping them hidden quite far north of our boundaries as she looks to evade the Manyelethi Males, who would surely not tolerate cubs sired from another male lion. This has meant that this pride has been spending more time north of our borders and their visits to Mala Mala are relatively short-lived and generally sightings of these lions haven't lasted more than two days. The sub-adult males are also at a stage where they might have to leave the pride in search of territory of their own. They were seen separated from the pride on one occasion at Mlowathi Dam. One of the sab-adult males was seen limping during the middle parts of December but recent sightings make us believe that he has healed well and looks to be walking more comfortably.

#### EYREFIELD PRIDE = 9

<b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>6 YEARS 6 MONTH</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>6 YEARS 5 MONTH</b>
<b>2 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 10 MONTH</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 10 MONTH</b>
<b>1 MALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 7 MONTH</b>
<b>2 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTH</b>

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, EYREFIELD  
(12 sightings)

There were only twelve confirmed sightings of the Eyrefield Pride during December. We were pleased to have viewed them more often on the eastern bank for this time of year as historically they tend to spend more time west of our boundaries during the wetter summer months. They have been receiving some pressure from the Marthly-Breakaway Pride to our west and this could be forcing them further east onto our property. One of the sub-adult males is very badly injured ( we suspect he had a run in with another pride) and no remorse is being shown to him from the rest of the pride. We doubt that he will last very long into 2014.

On one accassion we watched as the pride killed 2, nearly three, young wildebeest around the airstrip. One of the young males wasn't able to take down the third wildebeest and eventually hyenas had their way with the young animal. It was a chaotic and exciting sighting. They are spending good time with the Manyelethi Males and the coalition is showing good interest in the safety of the pride.

**FOURWAYS PRIDE = 4**

**2 ADULT FEMALES  
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE  
1 SUB ADULT MALE**

**UNKNOWN AGES  
3 YEARS 6 MONTH  
3 YEARS 6 MONTH**

**EASTERN MALAMALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN FLOCKFIELD,  
EASTERN CHARLESTON  
(3 sightings)**

There were three confirmed sightings of the Fourways Pride during December. It was good to see these lions spending more time on our property as they weren't seen at all during November. All three sightings were in eastern Mala Mala and Eyrefield and it still seems they do not have an established territory as of yet. The two males that the pride seem to have adopted are sure to be providing them with added strength and protection. It will be interesting to see what happens to these lions if they come into contact with the dominant coalition, meetings are bound to be hostile.

**MARTHLY PRIDE = 7**

**2 ADULT FEMALES  
1 SUB ADULT FEMALES  
4 CUBS  
MARTHLY  
(5 sightings)**

**11 YEARS 4 MONTHS  
2 YEARS 8 MONTHS  
±6 MONTHS**

There were five confirmed sightings of the Marthly Pride during December. Four of the five sightings were of the three lionesses and four cubs with the lionesses found on their own on one occasion. Most sightings were west of Stwise and they were found around Main Camp on one occasion. The sub-adult female is in good condition and looks to gaining acceptance from the Manyelethi Males. The Dark-mained Manyelethi Male was seen with the pride on one occasion. All the four cubs are looking strong and healthy.

**MANYELETHI MALES = 4**

**± 9 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

**MARTHLY, EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN  
CHARLESTON  
DOMINANT OVER THE STYX, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY AND BREAKAWAY  
MARTHLY PRIDES  
(9 sightings)**

There were nine confirmed sightings of the Manyelethi Males during December. All four lions were seen together once with the Eyrefield Pride on the Airstrip. Three of the Males spend two days at Mlowathi Dam possibly keeping an eye out on any threat from the North. They were also seen close to the Gowrie Boundary on the third of the month. Three of the Males were spotted around the Causeway as the Dark-Maned Male was with the Marthly Pride.

In terms of territorial threats, there have been other male lions from Gowrie mating with the lionesses from the Styx Pride near the Gowrie Boundary. In fact recent news indicates one of the lionesses have given birth to cubs. The Manyelethi Males continue to interact rarely with the Styx Pride so it is of no surprise to see the lionesses seeking out other male lions. The Manyelethi males have no tolerance of the sub adults from the Styx Pride which naturally results in the Styx Pride sticking to the northern parts of MalaMala.

**CHARLESTON PRIDE = 3**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**

**8 YEARS 12 MONTHS**

**2 SUB ADULT MALES**

**2 YEARS 8 MONTH**

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

(1 sighting)

There was one confirmed sightings of the Charleston Pride during December. The three lions were seen on the Charleston/Flockfield Boundary in the very southern parts of the property. We assume that most of their movements to have taken place on the southern bank of the Sand River in Toulon.

**SELATI PRIDE = 17**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**

**14 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

**3 ADULT FEMALES**

**±10 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

**3 ADULT FEMALES**

**UNKNOWN AGES**

**4 SUB ADULT MALES**

**2 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

**2 SUB ADULT FEMALES**

**2 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

**2 CUBS**

**±1 YEAR 7 MONTHS**

**2 CUBS**

**1 YEAR 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN CHARLESTON

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Selati Pride during December. Reports from our neighbours suggest that the dynamics of this pride are erratic as male lions fight for dominance often splitting the pride up for several days.

**MALES FROM THE EYREFIELD PRIDE = 2**

**1 EYREFIELD MALE**

**6 YEARS 5 MONTH**

**MARTHLY MALE**

**8 YEARS 5 MONTH**

NOMADIC

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of either of these male lions in December.

**KRUGER MALE LION = 1** **± 8 YEARS**  
SOUTHERN CHARLESTON, WESTERN CHARLESTON  
DOMINANT OVER THE SELATI PRIDE  
(0 sightings)

There were no recorded sightings of the single Kruger Male lion. Reports indicate he is competing with the young males from the Eyrefield and Marthly Prides for dominance over the Selati Pride. Reports also state that the Kruger Male is dominant over the younger Eyrefield Male but the older Marthly Male is dominant over the Kruger Male. There is another coalition of three male lions who were seen on MalaMala once last month. One of these males were seen mating with a Selati Lioness's in Peru which means they are a threat to the Kruger Male Lion.

Other lions encountered: (4 sightings)

- **The Break- Away Marthly Pride (14 lions)** (1 sighting)

There was one confirmed sighting of this pride during December. They were seen around Small-Paraffin Drift in Marthly. This large pride is growing to dominate a large proportion of the Sabi Sands. The four lionesses are very strong and are a direct threat to the Marthly Pride as well as the Eyrefield pride and could look to force the latter to spend more time east of the Sand River in the future.

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

There were no sightings of these males during December.

- **4 unidentified young males seen inconsistently so far in 2013.** (0 sighting)

These same lions did not appear on MalaMala in December. They were last seen in July.

- **2 young male lions with Fourways Pride** (3 sightings)

These two young male lions were seen on three occasions in December. 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 three sightings of them was in the company of the Fourways Pride and it seems that the pride has adopted them as their own

- **3 adult male lions in Charleston** (1 sighting)

There was one sighting of the three adult males during December. They were seen on Campbell Rd in South West Charleston toward the end of the month. We assume that they are competing with a number of male lions for dominance in the southern reaches of the Sabi Sands.

- **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 no confirmed sightings of him during December although there was a male lion seen at Clarendon Dam. Reports suggest that this male lion has been mating with the two Styx pride Lionesses and spends

time with them when they are in Gowrie.

- **2 Fully-Maned Male Lions from Gowrie** (0 sightings)

There were no sightings of these two male lions during December. These two males were seen once near Clarendon Dam Road. Reports from Gowrie indicate these two males have also mated with the two Styx Lionesses in recent times.

- **A pride of 7 lions seen in December 2013.** (2 sightings)

There were two sightings of this unidentified pride during December. They were found once in Flockfield and again in Charleston. On the second occasion the two lionesses were found feeding off a warthog carcass and were separated from the sub-adults. Research indicates that this pride is generally found East of the Sand River in Toulon and most probably came in from the Kruger National Park. One of the sub-adult males is quite uneasy around the vehicles. Some speculate that they could be some of the descendants of the legendary Windmill Pride that patrolled Mala Mala a decade ago. We wait to see if they will still venture onto Mala Mala and whether they will be seen on a regular occasion.

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

<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>57</b>
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#### **LEOPARDS**

##### **BICYCLE CROSSING MALE**

**11 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

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

There were eight confirmed sightings of the Bicycle Crossing Male in December. This dominant male continues to expand his territory and was viewed patrolling in eastern Flockfield and Charleston. He was found on the 20<sup>th</sup> in the company of another male leopard, there was also a bushbuck kill in the vicinity that was most probably killed by the younger male. It is evident that this dominant male fears little threat from the younger males that venture into his territory such as the male leopard from Peru, as well as his son, the Son of the Dudley Female. Other sightings of him took place in Charleston around Charleston North crossing and Jakkalsdraai Open Area.

##### **AIRSTRIP MALE**

**7 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

MALAMALA, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY  
(8 sightings)

There were eight confirmed sightings of the Airstrip Male in December. It appears that his left eye is slowly beginning to heal. 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. He was seen in his favourite spots such as the Ngoboswan Donga, Planks Pan and along the Mlowathi river.

**MARTHLY MALE****± 12 YEARS**MALAMALA, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY  
(3 sighting)

The Marthly Male was seen three times during December. His presence is always well admired as he patrols around the southern perimetres of his territory. He was seen twice in Marthly and once east of the causeway. He is stiff competition for the Airstrip male as well as the equally build Princess Alice Pans Male and the frequency of their encounters should increase as they continue to push the boundaries of their territories.

**CHARLESTON MALE****7 YEARS 6 MONTHS**EASTERN CHARLESTON, NORTHERN TOULON  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Charleston male during December. The only sighting of the Charleston male this year occurred in May. He was seen heading eastwards around the southern parts of Jakkalsdraai open area. We assume he is competing with the Bicycle Crossing male and the Hogvaal Male for territory.

**WEST STREET MALE****4 YEARS 7 MONTHS**WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(2 sightings)

The West Street Male was seen on two occasions in December. Most of his sighting were in the eastern parts of the property, and rarely over the past couple months have we seen him around West Street bridge, where he used to reside. This could be from the pressure put on him by the Newington Male to the west or he could be in the initial stages of developing a new territory in an area where we havnt seen a dominant male for a while. He was seen on the first day of the month around Buffalo Pans and then seen a few days later around Emsagwen crossing.

**NEWINGTON MALE****5 YEARS 2 MONTHS**WESTERN MALAMALA  
(9 sightings)

There were nine confirmed sightings of the Newington Male during December. He was viewed three times on the eastern bank of the Sand River and continues to put pressure on the West Street Male. His increasing visits to the eastern bank could also be because of the pressure put on him by his father, the Princess Alice Pans Male, as he forces him to set up a territory of his own. It an unusual turn of events rangers watched as him and his father, the Princess Alice Pans Male, took turns to mate with the Tamboti Female. There was little anamosity shown between the two male leopards although the younger Newington Male is still relatively submissive to his father.

**HOGVAAL MALE****7 YEARS 8 MONTHS**EASTERN EYREFIELD, EASTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, EASTERN  
CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)**TSLEBE ROCKS MALE****± 8 YEARS**

NORTHERN EYREFIELD

(0 sightings)

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

**13 YEARS**

There were five confirmed sightings of the Princess Alice Pans Male during December. All of the sightings were on the western bank of the Sand River. He is receiving territorial pressure from a number of other males including the Marthly Male and his son, the Newington Male, who he took turns in mating with the Tamboti Female during the middle of the month.

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

**± 6/7 YEARS**

**KIKILEZI FEMALE**  
WESTERN MALAMALA, MARTHLY  
(5 sightings)

**12 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

There were four confirmed sightings of the Kikilezi Female in December. She is showing very evident signs of suckle marks and is lactating, indicative of cubs suckling. We presume that she is harbouring her cubs somewhere around Campbell Koppies as she was viewed mainly around these rocky outcrops during the month. She has been trying to raise cubs ever since her year old son was killed during the floods in January 2013. Her previous litter we assume was killed at a very young age in late winter during 2013 and we wait to see how many and where she is raising this litter.

**TAMBOTI FEMALE**  
**1 CUB (FEMALE)**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA  
(7 sightings of female, 5 sightings of female and cub, 4 sightings of cub without female)

**6 YEARS 2 MONTHS**  
**10 MONTHS**

The Tamboti Female was the most prolific leopard during December and was seen twelve times as opposed to three times during November. Seven of the sightings were of the female on her own and her and her cub were seen five times together. The cub was seen four times on her own and is developing very well. All of the sightings of these two leopards were on the western bank of the river and she was seen on three occasions in close contact with the Newington Male. She was seen mating with both the Newington Male and the Princess Alice Pans Male at the same time. We are unsure of the reasoning behind this act as she would battle to conceive whilst already raising a cub, it could be a way to protect her cub we speculate.

**MLOWATHI FEMALE**  
NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sighting)

**6 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

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

**JAKKALSDRAAI FEMALE** **14 YEARS 1 MONTH**  
CENTRAL & WESTERN CHARLESTON, EAST OF THE SAND RIVER  
(2 sightings)

There were two confirmed sightings of the Jakkalsdraai Female in December. Both sightings were around Jakkalsdraai and we wait to see if her courtship with the Son of the Dudley Female was a successful one. She is still in great shape despite her age.

**DAUGHTER OF THE JAKKALSDRAAI FEMALE** **2 YEARS 4 MONTH**  
CENTRAL & WESTERN CHARLESTON, EAST OF THE SAND RIVER  
(1 sighting)

There was one confirmed sightings of the Daughter of the Jakkalsdraai Female during December. She was seen around KK crossing in Charleston and we believe that she spends most of her time in her mother's territory.

**OSTRICH KOPPIES FEMALE** **9 YEARS 2 MONTHS**  
EYREFIELD  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Ostrich Koppies Female in December. We presume that she is spending most of her time in Gowrie.

**MATSHIPIRI FEMALE** **13 YEARS 2 MONTHS**  
EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sightings)

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

**DAUGHTER OF THE MATSHIPIRI FEMALE** **2 YEARS 2 MONTHS**  
EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD  
(0 sighting)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Daughter of the Matshapiri Female in December. She continues to show independence still well within her mother's territory.

**DUDLEY FEMALE** **15 YEARS 2 MONTH**  
**1 FEMALE CUB** **1 YEAR 8 MONTHS**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD  
(1 sightings of female, 0 sighting of female and cub, 0 sightings of cub without female)

There was one confirmed sightings of the Dudley Female in December. She was seen without her cub on the western bank close to Rattray's Camp. We believe that her daughter is of the age now where she will look to become fully independent of her mother.

**FLOCKFIELD FEMALE** **9 YEARS 8 MONTHS**  
CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings of the Flockfield Female during December.

**THE EMSAGWENI FEMALE**  
WESTERN MALAMALA  
(5 sightings)

**3 YEARS 12 MONTHS**

There were five confirmed sightings of the Emsagweni Female in December. Her movements are fairly erratic as she looks to establish her own territory and find males that are willing to mate with her. She was seen once on the western bank of the river, possibly seeking out a mate. On one occasion she ascended a tree and caught a monkey at Picadilly.

**CALABASH FEMALE**  
**1 CUB** (Potentially more than 1 cub)  
WESTERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings, 0 sightings of cub without female, 0 sightings of female with cub)

**± 6.5 YEARS**  
**10 MONTHS**

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

**Other leopards encountered:**

- **Son of the Dudley Female 2009** (1 sighting)

**4 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

There was only one confirmed sighting of this leopard during December although there were a few male leopards briefly seen in this territory that could have been him. He is son to the Bicycle Crossing male and still spends a large proportion of his time within his father's land. It will be interesting to see if his father tolerates his presence or forces him to find a new territory. He was seen mating with the much older Jakkalsdaai female in October and we wait to see if she was able to conceive with the younger leopard.

- **Shaw's Female** (1 sighting)

**+/- 18 YEARS**

This very old female was positively identified on one occasion during December. This 18 year old leopard is still in reasonable shape and was seen on Flockfield Lookout heading west towards the Sand River.

- **Male leopard from Peru** (4 sightings)

**+/- 3,5 YEARS**

There were four confirmed sightings of this young leopard during December. He was seen in Western Flockfield and Mala Mala. We presume that he is exploring new areas in order to establish a territory of his own. He is a large leopard for his age and could look to put pressure on the Newington Male, the Bicycle Crossing Male and the West Street Male in the future. He was seen on one occasion in the presence of the Bicycle Crossing Male with a bushbuck kill.

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

There were five No ID female leopard sightings during December. Most of the sightings were in the southern parts of the property and could be a combination of the Calabash Female and the Daughter of the Jakkalsdraai Female, as well as other young leopards from neighbouring properties.

- **No ID males:** (5 sightings).

Most of these leopards would have been leopards that we know but the sighting didn't allow for a proper identification to be made. There was a young male seen around West Street bridge. He was relatively nervous of the vehicles.

- **No ID (gender and identity unconfirmed):** (2 sightings)
- **NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)**

<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>21</b>
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### CHEETAH (1 sighting)

There was only one cheetah sighting during December. It was a male cheetah that was found around the Airstrip. We believe that the female with two sub-adults that were seen frequently last month have moved east into the Kruger National Park. They do seem to explore land to our east but more than likely will return in the future.

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

<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>1</b>
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### CAPE HUNTING DOGS (9 sightings)

The Cape Hunting Dogs were active during December with a total of nine sightings. The pack of eight was seen five times. They went about their usual antics of hunting in the morning and evening while resting during the midday periods. Only one kill was witnessed during the month, it was an impala in the northern parts of Charleston. They were seen twice in the Sand River around West Street bridge

A pack of nine adults and six pups were also seen during December. They were viewed mainly in the northern parts of Eyrefield and Marthly. This pack denned in the western parts of the Sabi Sands during the winter. Now that the young pups are old enough to keep up with the adults we are seeing them more frequently as they move further east.

On the third of the month we had both packs on our property. The pack of fifteen around Mlowathi Dam and the pack of eight in Charleston.

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

### **CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS**

December brought about some healthy rain as we now enter into the rainy season. Towards the end of the month the tributaries of the Sand River were flowing and the dams and pans around the property were saturated. This allowed for the buffalo and elephants to be more spread out and herds numbering only a few elephant were found drinking from rivers and pans around the property. On a couple occasion family herds of elephant joined together to drink from dams such as Mlowathi and Clarendon Dam. The elephants and buffalo have also enjoyed cooling off in these now drenched pans in order to gain relief from the increasing heat from the summer sun. Lots of sightings involved elephants rolling around in these muddy pans and layering themselves in this protective mud.

The herds of buffalo have decreased in numbers as water becomes more readily available for them. The herds are now averaging closer to 100 individuals as opposed to 300-400 recorded during the last month. They still have been seen running down to Sand River in front of both camps providing excellent viewing from both decks and rooms.

### **OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS**

Civet: 6  
Sable Antelope: 2  
Serval: 1

### **TOTAL SIGHTINGS FOR DECEMBER 2013**

Lion: 44  
Leopard: 79  
Elephant: 115  
Buffalo: 67  
Cheetah: 1  
Cape Hunting Dogs: 9

