

MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – January 2013

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

WEATHER SUMMARY – JANUARY

Maximum temperature (°C)	39
Minimum temperature (°C)	19
Mean maximum (°C)	29
Mean minimum (°C)	21
Rainfall (mm)	281
Days of rain	12

*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF JANUARY 2013

LIONS

STYX PRIDE = 11

1 ADULT FEMALE	17 YEARS 4 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	10 YEARS 11 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	10 YEARS
1 ADULT FEMALE	5 YEARS
2 FEMALE SUB ADULTS	2 YEARS
2 MALE SUB ADULTS	2 YEARS
2 MALE CUBS	6 MONTHS
1 FEMALE CUB	6 MONTHS

MARTHLY, MALA MALA, EYREFIELD
(22 sightings)

An excellent month of sightings considering the period was heavily influenced by rain. Early during the month they had done well to kill an adult female buffalo at Mlowathi dam which they fed off for three full days. We also recorded the pride around the lower reaches of the Mlowathi River where they killed a male kudu. Whilst they were feeding on the kudu, the Kikilezi female stumbled upon the lions and the sub adults from the pride chased her up a tree. The leopard managed to escape without any injury.

The almost eleven year old lioness with the limp was not seen with the pride in sightings recorded toward the end of the month. It is likely that she is lagging behind and should be able to catch up soon, as she often does. The pride covered some good distance when we found their tracks leaving the scene of a buffalo carcass that the Manyelethi male lions were feeding on near the Kruger National Park boundary. We speculate that the male coalition had stolen the buffalo kill from the Fourways pride. The oldest lioness isolated herself from the pride when she snuck in a feed alongside the Manyelethi males. The rest of the pride was miles away at Campbell Koppies. The old stalwart then struggled to make up the ground and she spent a few days at Paddy's Pools. We have been saying for many months that it is a matter of time before she passes on. Her teeth are extremely worn and it must be difficult for her to eat. Her movement is limited to a slow hop. It was sad to leave her laying in the long grass, having no energy to stand as she roared gently into the night. The last sighting of the old lady was on the 30th. It remains to be seen if she has it in her to join up with her family again. On a positive note, the three youngest cubs and the four sub adults are in excellent condition. 2013 is going to be an interesting year for the Styx pride. It is time for the sub adults to make themselves more useful during hunts and the young males must begin to speculate their future careers. The mother of the sub adults may be ready for another litter at some stage during the year.

EYREFIELD PRIDE = 11

1 ADULT FEMALE	14 YEARS 3 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	5 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 ADULT FEMALE	5 YEARS 6 MONTHS
2 MALE CUBS	11 MONTHS
1 FEMALE CUB	11 MONTHS
2 MALE CUBS	8 MONTHS
2 MALE CUBS	6 MONTHS

MALA MALA, FLOCKFIELD, EYREFIELD
(2 sightings)

The Eyrefield pride spent most of their time to the west which is not unusual during the summer months. We have nothing to report out of the ordinary and all the youngsters are doing well. One of the sightings was near the Airstrip where they had killed a sub adult wildebeest. The carcass was finished within one morning. The eldest lioness is not showing the signs of pregnancy that was noticeable in the months prior. Hopefully she could produce another litter during the year.

FOURWAYS PRIDE = 5

2 ADULT FEMALES	UNKNOWN AGES
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	2 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	2 YEARS 7 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	± 3 YEARS

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

Just the two sightings of this small pride for the month. They were found in the very east on the boundary of the Kruger National Park in close proximity to the Manyelethi males that were feeding of a large buffalo bull. The tracks left at the scene would suggest that the male coalition had stolen the kill from the Fourways pride. This was the first time since mid-2011 that we have recorded the males interacting with the pride. It would seem that the confrontation was uneventful and the sub adult males were still among the pride without signs of stress. One of the young sub adult females has been missing since October last year and it can be assumed that she has passed away.

MARTHLY PRIDE = 4

1 ADULT FEMALE	14 YEARS 5 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	10 YEARS 6 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	1 YEAR 10 MONTHS

MARTHLY
(2 sightings)

All four of these lions were seen in the northern extremities of the property. On another occasion we recorded one of the adult females that still has a tail around Elephant Rock. The Marthly pride endured some hardships in 2012. Hopefully they can enjoy a successful 2013.

BREAKAWAY MARTHLY PRIDE = 4

4 ADULT FEMALES	4 YEARS
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MARTHLY
(0 sightings)

No confirmed sightings of this pride for the period. The territory of the pride is to the north and west of MalaMala. After only recording one sighting in 2012, we will **no longer report** their movements in the monthly game reports. It is not out of the question that they may still unite with the rest of the pride. The Manyelethi males spent plenty of time with this pride last year, in particular the Manyelethi male with the scarred nose. They should be able to produce some cubs successfully during the year.

MANYELETHI MALES = 4

± 8 YEARS

MARTHLY, EYREFIELD, MALA MALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

DOMINANT OVER THE STYX, EYREFIELD, FOURWAYS, MARTHLY AND BREAKAWAY MARTHLY PRIDES

(4 sightings)

Most of the sightings of these males was when they were feeding off a buffalo on our eastern boundary. All four males were present and it would seem that they had stolen the kill from the Fourways pride. 2012 was a successful year for the males, siring seven new cubs to the Eyrefield pride and three cubs to the Styx pride. In years to come, and once these legends have moved on, their legacy and success as a coalition will be remembered by the number of offspring they have sired. With some luck, their current cubs will survive to adulthood and they can father some more cubs during the year.

The powerful coalition did not endure any major threat to their kingdom in 2012 and they should be able to enjoy the same fortune this year. The brothers are all in excellent condition and it would take a great deal to overthrow them at this stage.

CHARLESTON PRIDE = 3

1 ADULT FEMALE

8 YEARS 1 MONTH

2 SUB ADULT MALES

1 YEAR 9 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

(0 sightings)

No confirmed sightings during the period.

SELATI PRIDE = 17

1 ADULT FEMALE

14 YEARS

3 ADULT FEMALES

±10 YEARS

3 ADULT FEMALES

UNKOWN AGES

4 SUB ADULT MALES

2 YEARS

2 SUB ADULT FEMALES

2 YEARS

2 CUBS

±8 MONTHS

2 CUBS

4 MONTHS

WESTERN CHARLESTON

(3 sightings)

At the early stages of the month the pride had been spending time apart and not all members were moving together. This was apparent at a buffalo kill that they had made where only eight lions were present along with the Kruger male. Toward month end, all of the lions were seen together feeding off yet another buffalo kill, which was good to see all the lions together again.

NOMADIC MALES FROM THE EYREFIELD PRIDE = 2

1 MALE

5 YEARS 6 MONTHS

MARTHLY MALE

7 YEARS 6 MONTHS

NOMADIC

(0 sightings)

These nomads were not seen during the period. Reports would suggest that they have been spending time in the western Sabi Sands.

KRUGER MALE LION = 1

± 7 YEARS 3 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON, WESTERN CHARLESTON

DOMINANT OVER THE SELATI PRIDE

(3 sightings)

All three sightings of this good looking male were of him in the company of the Selati pride. He is somewhat of an anomaly to the area in that he is a single male dominant over a single pride. It is more usual to have coalitions of males that are able to compete successfully for territory and become dominant over prides. The Kruger male's brother died during 2012 and it will be interesting times ahead for this him. It would be wise to not stray too far from the many females in the Selati pride who should assist him should any takeover attempts be made.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LIONS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

January	53
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LEOPARDS:

BICYCLE CROSSING MALE

11 YEARS

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN CHARLESTON
(1 sighting)

One confirmed sighting of the Bicycle Crossing male around Rattray's Camp. We saw an unknown male and female leopard that were well within this male's territory. A few days later we discovered that the Bicycle Crossing male had been mating with the ageing Shaws female. It could have been that the unknown leopards was in fact this same mating pair.

AIRSTRIP MALE

6 YEARS 7 MONTHS

MALA MALA, EYREFIELD, MARTHLY, NORHTERN FLOCKFIELD
(6 sightings)

The most dominant male on the property has undergone a shift in his territory over the last few months. He has been recorded on the western bank of the Sand River on fewer occasions than previously. This could be a combination of the rising water of the river presenting a difficult challenge to cross, as well as the rising presence of the Newington and Princess Alice Pans males in that region. The latter was seen a record ten times this last month which is more than we have seen before. The Airstrip male was seen mating with the Kikilezi female on one day during the month. This is sad news for both leopards as it could mean that their son born in April 2012 has died. It is perhaps too soon to tell for sure but we can assume that the cub's short life is over. See 'Kikilezi female' below for more.

CHARLESTON MALE

6 YEARS 7 MONTHS

EASTERN CHARLESTON, NORTHERN TOULON
(0 sightings)

No confirmed sightings for the period.

WEST STREET MALE

3 YEARS 9 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD
(1 sighting)

Hopefully this male can step up his attempts to become territorial in 2013. He has a new threat to this cause in the form of a young male who was been on two occasions this month in the same regions that the West Street male resides in.

NEWINGTON MALE

4 YEARS 3 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA
(3 sightings)

This month we saw yet another peaceful interaction between this male and his father, the Princess Alice Pans male. His father is clearly accepting that his son is a rising force and is perhaps prepared to let him

take over his empire. The Newington male's increased presence on the western bank is placing pressure on the Airstrip male to spend more time to the east. Toward the end of the month, the Newington male stole an impala kill from the Tamboti female. After a scrap with a hyena, the male dragged the kill a few hundred yards to the safety of a tree where he fed in peace for the following days.

HOGVAAL MALE

6 YEARS 9 MONTHS

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

No confirmed sightings during the period.

TSLEBE ROCKS MALE

± 7 YEARS 1 MONTH

NORTHERN EYREFIELD
(1 sighting)

An incredible sighting of this large male when he successfully killed a baby steenbok. It is incredible to see the stealth of a leopard and during this hunt the male showed his skill to pounce upon the young antelope unnoticed.

PRINCESS ALICE PANS MALE

12 YEARS 1 MONTH

WESTERN MALAMALA
(10 sightings)

Ten sightings of this large male is more than we have ever recorded of him. This was largely thanks to a sub adult kudu kill that he had made which he fed off for four consecutive days. The Princess Alice Pans male was once again very tolerant of his son, the Newington male, who is steadily gaining dominance and should be in a position to take over his fathers domain.

GOWRIE MALE

± 6/7 YEARS

NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD
(0 sightings)

No confirmed sightings during the period.

KIKILEZI FEMALE

11 YEARS 4 MONTHS

1 MALE CUB

10 MONTHS

WESTERN MALA MALA, MARTHLIY

(5 sightings of female, 3 sightings of female and cub, 4 sightings of cub without female)

January 2013 could potentially be remembered as a sad month for these leopards. The cub of the Kikilezi female was last seen with his mother on the 12th. Since then, we have recorded the Kikilezi female without the company of her son on four occasions. There was no reason to be alarmed until we found the Airstrip male with female company. With heavy hearts the female was confirmed to be the Kikilezi female. This would suggest that the female has lost her cub and it starting a bid to try again. It was strange that the mating only lasted for one day and the female did not follow the male to continue mating as he went on his way to patrol territory. Perhaps the mother was not prepared to leave her territory so that she could look for her cub. One one morning we followed the Kikilezi female as she moved through the Mlowathi River, calling for her cub as she went. She was unfortunate to stumble upon the Styx Pride that were feeding on a kudu carcass that they had killed the night before. With all her experience, the leopard simply scaled a tree nearby, waited for the lions to lose interest until she could make a speedy escape.

By all accounts, it seems safe to assume the fourth litter of this extraordinary leopard has failed. Her previous litters have each produced a cub to independence, but that would be a record that was going to be very difficult to maintain. We will not reflect on the cub's short life until his passing is certain.

TAMBOTI FEMALE**5 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALA MALA

(1 sighting)

The much loved Tamboti female was unfortunately only seen once in January. Her decrease in sightings has been a sad trend over the last few months. Till now, we have believed that she has been spending more time to the west. Reports suggest that this is not the case and it would seem that she is simply operating in areas that are difficult to navigate. Could it be that she is preparing to produce her first litter of cubs? She could be scanning her territory searching for suitable den sites and this would provide a good answer as to why she is being seen less. For now, she is showing no clear signs of pregnancy, although it is difficult to tell after only observing her during one sighting. Only time will tell what she has been up to. Toward month end, the Tamboti female killed a full grown adult male impala. While she was suffocating the antelope, the Newington male came along and stole her meal. It was a dark and stormy night providing for good hunting conditions and we are sure the female was able to make another kill.

MLOWATHI FEMALE**6 YEARS**

NORTHWESTERN EYREFIELD

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the report period.

JAKKALSDRAAI FEMALE**13 YEARS 2 MONTHS****1 FEMALE CUB****1 YEAR 6 MONTHS**

CENTRAL & WESTERN CHARLESTON, EAST OF THE SAND RIVER

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

One confirmed sighting of the female cub of the Jakkalsdraai female. This is good news and the cub should be set to begin her path to independence. The mother was mating with the Charleston male last month, which is a clear indication that she is willing to step up the process of evicting her cub.

CAMPBELL KOPPIES FEMALE**13 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD

(0 sightings)

There were no sightings during the report period.

OSTRICH KOPPIES FEMALE**8 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD

(2 sightings)

Exciting news for the Ostrich Koppies female! She has produced a new litter. Of this there is no doubt since the suckle marks are clearly visible on her teats. For now she is hiding the cub(s) in a drainage system that is difficult to navigate and it may be some time before she reveals the new arrivals to us. The father of the litter is expected to be the Airstrip male after the pair have been seen mating more than once in recent months.

MATSHIPIRI FEMALE**12 YEARS 3 MONTHS****1 FEMALE CUB****1 YEAR 3 MONTHS**

EASTERN MALA MALA, EASTERN EYREFIELD

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

No confirmed sightings during the period.

DUDLEY FEMALE**14 YEARS 4 MONTHS****1 CUB****9 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD

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

We were pleased to record a sighting of the female with her cub after some absence. The cub is doing well and is very relaxed in the presence of vehicles.

FLOCKFIELD FEMALE
1 CUB

8 YEARS 9 MONTHS
1 YEAR 7 MONTHS

CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

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

No confirmed sightings of these leopards for the period.

WESTERN FEMALE
WESTERN MALA MALA
(0 sightings)

15 YEARS

There were no sightings during the report period. Also known as the ‘Maxabeni’ female, it is believed that the Western female has passed on. She has not been seen for many months and she will no longer feature in the game reports. She was born in January 1998 and had a difficult journey to adulthood after her mother disappeared when the cub was less than a year old. She has produced many litters throughout her life, and with little luck only three cubs are still surviving. Her legacy will live on through her surviving offspring. The Hogvaal male and the Newington male are two of her sons currently frequently viewed on the property. The Hogvaal male is well established and his younger brother, the Newington male is showing plenty of promise. The Newington male’s twin brother is becoming dominant to the south and west.

Other leopards encountered:

- **Daughter of the Kikilezi female 2009:** (2 sightings)
Once again this exceptional hunter showed off her skill when she killed a duiker in broad daylight. She is showing all the signs of becoming a successful leopard and 2013 is going to be a big year for her.
- **Son of the Dudley female 2009:** (2 sightings)
- **Female leopard with the blemish in eye:** (0 sightings)
- **Unknown male from Styx crossing:** (2 sightings)
We have been seeing this male for some time now. Initially nervous, he is completely relaxed now and has been on two occasions during the month around Styx crossing. This is within the areas that the West Street male frequents, but the West Street male has been able to easily intimidate this leopard in the past.
- **No ID females:** (1 sighting)
This female was seen with male company around the Tamboti Thickets. It is suspected that it was the ageing Shaws female.
- **No ID males:** (3 sightings)
One of these sightings was of a male with female company around the Tamboti Thickets. It may have been the Bicycle Crossing male.
- **No ID (gender and identity unconfirmed):** (1 sighting)
This was a very brief sighting of a leopard cub (approximately one year of age) seen on the Kruger National Park boundary. It could potentially have been the cub of the Matshipiri female.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

January	20
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CHEETAH

The two brothers were seen at Clarendon Dam three times. Once again the show of the month belonged to the female cheetah with her cubs, that were seen an amazing twelve times! One of the cubs has gone missing and there are now three remaining. This young family has been spending most of their time on the open plains of Flockfield where the mother has been providing for her cubs extremely well. A single young male cheetah was also viewed around Flockfield Tower. This is a young male who has been spending most of his time to the west and is the first sighting we have recorded of him.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED

January	7
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

The pack of Cape hunting dogs that previously denned on western Charleston has been reduced to six adults and two pups. There were initially seven pups in the litter and it is sad that only two remain. This pack was seen on one occasion during the month.

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED (approximate)

January	9
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

Buffalo have been around in vast numbers over the past report period. Two large herds of around three hundred animals have been seen regularly throughout the property. As expected, sightings of 'Dagha boys' have been frequent and there has been a group of around fifteen of these old males been seen regularly on western Charleston.

Only once during the month were elephants not seen and it was on a day of heavy rain. Their numbers range from single bulls to large family herds. Overall the elephants have been very relaxed and provided the guests with excellent viewing and photographic opportunities. Other interesting sightings have been of newborn elephants. These youngsters provide hours of entertainment and make for fine viewing.

OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

A pair of mating Duiker was seen which is certainly very rare to witness. One serval was also seen.

TOTAL SIGHTINGS FOR JANUARY 2013

Lion:	33	
Leopard:	50	
Elephant:	148	
Buffalo:	61	
Cheetah:	16	
Cape Hunting Dog:	1	