

# APRIL

## 2017 GAME REPORT



**MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – APRIL 2017**

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

<b>APRIL WEATHER SUMMARY</b>					
<i>TEMPERATURE</i>					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	34	28.7	Maximum	93.2	83.6
Minimum	11	17.5	Minimum	51.8	63.5
<i>RAINFALL</i>					
Millimeters		Inches		Days of rain	
0		0		0	

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF APRIL 2017

**LIONS**

**STYX PRIDE = 5**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>14 YEARS 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>9 YEARS 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>6 YEARS 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 ADULT MALES*</b>	<b>5 YEARS 2 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 CUBS</b>	<b>±6 MONTHS</b>

NORTHERN EYREFIELD

(5 sightings)

*\*Males last seen with core pride: May 2015.*

Members of the Styx pride were viewed on only three occasions in April. They were seen in the Mlowati River, south of the Gowrie Boundary on all three occasions. There was only one occasion whereby one of the Gowrie males was present with the Styx pride. On the 21<sup>st</sup> a single Gowrie male was seen on the bank of the Mlowati River not far from the members of the Styx pride. The cubs have surpassed the six-month mark in good strength. Both cubs were present at all three sightings, whereby they set about the daily task of tail pulling and ear chewing with the closest member of the pride, willing or otherwise.

**EYREFIELD PRIDE = 6**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>9 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>5 YEARS 1 MONTH</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 MALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 MALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 3 MONTHS</b>

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, CHARLESTON

(8 sightings)

Members of the Eyrefield Pride were seen on eight occasions in April. They have fled into Charleston since being exiled from their territory in the north and losing one of the adult females to the Kambula pride early in the month. It has been a very difficult time for this pride, on top of losing their hunting grounds and one of the members they have lost the protection they had from the two Matshipiri males who are now spending their time with the Kambula pride.

The Eyrefield pride spent most of the month in the vicinity of Calabash Crossing in southwest Charleston. Only moving as far as Charleston North Crossing towards the end of the month.

The current situation leaves the cubs very vulnerable, the deceased lioness was renowned as an exceptional hunter. The surviving two lionesses will have their work cut out keeping the cubs safe and fed. The cubs are at risk of being killed by one of two male lion coalitions currently active in the south. The current situation represents the sensitive nature of lion dynamics and how the addition or loss of a few lions can completely change the dynamics. With lions being an apex predator the power shift can change the dynamics of all the species below lions in the ecological hierarchy.

**FOURWAYS PRIDE = 6**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>UNKNOWN AGE</b>
<b>1 SUB ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>6 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 FEMALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>

EASTERN FLOCKFIELD

(7 sightings)

The Fourways pride was seen on seven occasions in April. They too have not been seen in the company of the two Matshipiri males since January when the males turned their attention to the Kambula pride. However unlike the Eyrefield pride, the Fourways pride were able to hang on to their territory and have done well to avoid unwanted attention from other rival prides and male coalitions.

The Fourways pride was seen north of the MalaMala Flockfield boundary on four occasions in April. Making regular visits to Emsagwen Waterhole as well as Paddy's Pools and Hogvaal Road. Although the area is not entirely foreign to them its not an area they are commonly seen. This could potentially be as a result of pressure from lions to their south and east. The coming months will be a telling time for the Fourways pride as all the lions on MalaMala feel the effects of a power shift.

**MARTHLY PRIDE = 11**

<b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>14 YEARS 7 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>5 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>
<b>3 SUB-ADULT MALES</b>	<b>3 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>3 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 CUBS</b>	<b>±10 MONTHS</b>
<b>3 CUBS</b>	<b>±9 MONTHS</b>
MARTHLY, MALAMALA	
(1 sighting)	

There was only one sighting of the members of the Marthly pride in April. They were seen at Elephant Rock on the 6<sup>th</sup>. The Marthly pride continues to be quite scarce since the Matshipiri males chased the Clarendon males in January. However all the members of the Marthly pride were seen in very good condition and the cubs looked healthy and well fed.

**KAMBULA PRIDE = 6**

<b>6 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>± 4 YEAR 3 MONTHS</b>
MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD	
(17 sightings)	

Formally known as the Marthly Breakaway pride, the Kambula pride derives its name from Shangaan name given to William (Wac) Campbell after which Campbell Koppies are named. The six females have had a major influence on the lion dynamics on MalaMala, displacing the oldest resident pride (the Eyrefield pride) from its strong hold in central MalaMala and Flockfield.

The Kambula pride dominated the lion sightings on MalaMala this month. They were seen a total of seventeen times in April. On all seventeen occasions they were also seen with either one or both Matshipiri males present. The two males have been concentrating all their attention on the six lioness since the beginning of the year when they ousted the two Clarendon males who were the last males seen with the Kambula pride. The lionesses covered the entirety of MalaMala during April; they were seen as far east as Sable Road, as far north as Ostrich Koppies and as far south as Rattray's camp. They were regularly viewed crossing through the Sand River and leaving the property westward.

The Kambula pride have yet to settle down in any one particular area, they were moving constantly and were never seen in the same place two days in a row. Which could potentially lure the Matshipiri males into other male's territories. But if the Kambula pride do settle down and form a strong bond with the young Matshipiri males they have the potential to create one of the largest prides seen recently on MalaMala

**CHARLESTON PRIDE = 5**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**

**12 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**5 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

**2 MALE CUBS**

**±12 YEARS**

CHARLESTON

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**MATSHIPIRI MALES = 2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±6 YEARS 11MONTHS**

FLOCKFIELD, MALAMALA

*First encounter: April 2015*

(19 sightings)

The Matshipiri male lion coalition was present on nineteen occasions in April. The two males were seen in the company of the Kambula pride on fifteen of the nineteen days they were seen. The two males were one of the most consistent sightings in April. They did not move further east than Lion Loop and never went further south than West Street. With the Kambula pride now getting the full attention of the Matshipiri males, the offspring they have with the Eyrefield and Fourways prides have been left extremely vulnerable.

Although the males have abandoned their only offspring, they have secured mating privileges with six young, fertile females. While the Eyrefield and Fourways prides only had five breeding females between the two of them, so statistically speaking, the Matshipiri males stand the chance of having a far greater genetic contribution to the lion population of MalaMala than they would have if they remained with the Fourways and Eyrefield prides.

It is important to keep in mind the tempestuous nature of the Kambula females so as much as the Matshipiri male stands to gain from their endeavors with the Kambula pride, it's not without risk. These females have yet to settle down in any particular area so there is a high risk that the nomadic nature of the females may lure other larger male lion coalitions into their paths. All shall be revealed with time.

**CLARENDON MALES = 2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±12 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

MARTHLY, NORTHERN MALAMALA

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**GOWRIE MALES = 4**

**1 ADULT MALE**

**± 6 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

**3 ADULT MALES**

**± 5 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

**EYREFIELD, MALAMALA - DOMINANT OVER THE STYX PRIDE**

*First encounter: September 2015.*

(2 sightings)

Members of the Gowrie male coalition were only seen on two occasions in April. One of the males was seen on the 21<sup>st</sup> in close proximity to the Styx pride at Mlowati dam. The following day two of the males were seen at the Old Borehole in northern Eyrefield. The males then crossed back north over the Gowrie Boundary and were not seen again for the remainder of the month of April.

**Other Lions Encountered:**

The three Manyeleti males were seen on the fifth in the Sand River west of Bicycle Crossing. The three legendary males remained there for the morning then moved back west off the property. With the current situation with the lion dynamics, its any bodies guess as to what the intentions of the three venerable males.

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

<b>APRIL</b>	<b>38</b>
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**LEOPARDS:**

**BICYCLE CROSSING MALE**

**15 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

**WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD**

(5 sightings)

The Bicycle Crossing male leopard was seen on five occasions in April. The first two sightings of him were in Charleston near Trollop's Camp an area in which he is commonly seen. But the other three sightings of him that were towards the end of the month saw him making a significant push northwards. He was seen at West Street Bridge on the 16<sup>th</sup>, were he was seen roaring and scent marking in the area. The following day the he continued north and was located at Piccadilly Pans. The following day saw him casually strolling past the Kambula pride and Matshipiri males near Main Camp.

The Bicycle Crossing male continued to the crossing that earned him his name and settled there for the morning. He later was seen moving westwards off the property.

**WEST STREET MALE****8 YEARS 1 MONTH**

CHARLESTON

(5 sightings)

There were five sightings of the West Street male leopard in April. He was seen on the 8<sup>th</sup> with the Teardrop female and her two cubs on Sibuye Drive. The four leopards were seen feeding off the remains of an impala carcass. The West Street male remained in the area for two days before moving off. He was located again on the 18<sup>th</sup> at Ingwe Donga in southeastern Charleston. He continued westwards and was seen again two days later on the western bank of the Sand River, on the Charleston Toulon boundary.

The West Street male then made a move into the Bicycle Crossing male's territory in northern Charleston on the 25<sup>th</sup>. He was seen moving east towards Jakkalsdraai Open Area before moving back south again.

**TREEHOUSE MALE****± 7 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, MARTHLY

(6 sightings)

The Treehouse male leopard was seen on six occasions in April, all of which were on the western bank of the Sand River between West Street Bridge and Main Camp. The Treehouse male was not hanging around in April, he was never seen in the same place two days in row. The cost of having such a large territory is that you have to be constantly present in all corners of your territory and in this case that requires a covering a lot of ground in a very short space of time.

The Treehouse male has done well to cover that ground and maintain the real estate that he has worked so hard to keep. The fruit of which will be measured in the number of cubs he sires. So as much as sightings of this male are somewhat intermittent, the advantage is that this prime specimen of a leopard is able to pass on his genetics to multiple offspring. Which in the long run will benefit the entire leopard population as a whole.

**ACCIPITER MALE****± 6 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD

(4 sightings)

The elusive Accipiter male leopard was seen on four occasions in April. He continues to be an infrequent occurrence on the property despite the fact that the majority of his territory is on MalaMala. Sightings of this male are usually brief and from long range as the he has not yet become accustomed to the presence of the vehicles.

The Accipiter male is never seen too far away from the Matshipiri River; the furthest he was seen from the river in April was Paddy's Pools. Generally he is encountered between Donald's Crossing and Drum crossing or Ridge Road/Terminalia Road area. On the 28<sup>th</sup> he was seen with a impala kill in the Matshipiri River midway between the aforementioned crossings.

**SPLIT ROCK MALE**

**2 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD

*Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, independent latter half of 2015*

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period

**SENEGAL BUSH MALE**

**4 YEARS 7 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD, MARTHLY, MALAMALA

*Brother of the Quarantine male leopard from the North*

(6 sightings)

The Senegal Bush male leopard is a young male leopard that has slowly made his way onto MalaMala from the north in the last year. He was first encountered a year ago in the Mlowati River where he started challenging the Airstrip male for his territory. The young male managed to take over the Airstrip male's territory in northern Eyrefield. The Senegal Bush male gets his name from a landmark on the eastern bank of the Mlowati River known as Senegal Bush where he was regularly seen.

The Senegal Bush male leopard was seen on six occasions in April. He has become one of the more regular leopard sightings on the northern parts of the property. He has also laid claim to the area around Campbell Koppies. He has been seen mating with the young Sibuye female in the past and on the 28<sup>th</sup> was once again seen with her in northern Eyrefield mating, only this time the pair was joined by the Piccadilly female. The three leopards completed the spectacle by bringing down an impala in the area.

The Senegal Bush male has firmly secured his spot on MalaMala and will have a promising future as the dominant male in the north.

**KIKILEZI FEMALE**

**15 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

**1 MALE CUB**

**1 YEAR**

**1 FEMALE CUB**

**1 YEAR**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

(5 sightings of female, 2 sightings of the cubs)

After a month long absence the Kikilezi female was once again back on home ground much to the elation of all the staff. The legendary female leopard was seen near Main Camp on the 20<sup>th</sup> without her cubs. It has been a year since the two young cubs were discovered in the Mlowati River and what a year it has been, so understandably there was much joy when the cubs were seen with the female the following day on an impala kill near the airstrip.



The Kikilezi female and cubs abandoned the kill the following day and were seen near Main Camp sleeping off the effects of the previous day's feast. They remained in the area for the remainder of the month.

**PICADILLY FEMALE**

**3 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(3 sightings)

The Piccadilly was seen on three occasions in April. She was first seen on the 2nd near Campbell Koppies. It was another week before she was seen again near the causeway where she moved off north and east towards Piccadilly triangle. Almost three weeks went by before she was seen again. She made an appearance on the 28<sup>th</sup> with the Senegal Bush male and Sibuye female in northern Eyrefield. This was the first time she showed any interest in mating, yet another big step for the young female who is maturing by the day into a beautiful adult leopardess.

**SIBUYE FEMALE**

**3 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(5 sightings)

For the first time since becoming independent, the Sibuye female leopard was seen on more occasions than her sister. The Sibuye female never strayed too far from the Mlowati River in all five cases. The Mlowati River forms the core of her territory, one that was carved out by her mother a few years back. The Sibuye female showed her maturity by bringing down two impala in four days, first on the 24<sup>th</sup> and the other on the 28<sup>th</sup> when she was also seen with her sister mating with the Senegal Bush male.

The Sibuye female has shown that she the more precocious of the two daughters of the Kikilezi female and shows much promise for the future. She has already been seen mating multiple times and is regularly seen feeding on kills. The future is bright for his young leopard.

**TAMBOTI FEMALE**

**9 YEARS 7 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

(6 sightings)

The Tamboti female was seen on six occasions in April. The western bank of the Sand River forms the eastern most parts of her territory. She was first encountered at Princess Alice Pans on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, she moved west and was only seen ten days later in the same location.

The Tamboti female was seen on another four occasions between Rattray's and Main Camp. She has yet to show any signs that she may be pregnant since losing her last cub nearly ten months ago. Hopefully the coming months will see her spending some time with the Treehouse male as well as other males in the area.

**ISLAND FEMALE** **4 YEARS**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA  
*Daughter of the Tamboti female, independent first quarter of 2015*  
(10 sightings)

The Island female leopard dominated leopard sightings on MalaMala for the month of April. She continued her trend of moving into the former territory of the Emsagweni female. She was seen moving as far east as the Matshipiri River and as far north as Main Camp. Within the first two days of the month she moved from the Matshipiri River all the way to the Parking Bay.

This behavior continued for the remainder of the month where she moved back and forth from the southern parts of the Matshipiri River and the Airstrip. This has kept the rangers scratching their heads over why she is moving in this manner. Hopefully time will reveal the thinking behind this process.

**EMSAGWENI FEMALE** **7 YEARS 4 MONTHS**  
MALAMALA  
(1 sighting)

There was only one sighting of the Emsagweni female in April. She has been very scarce since the Island female started moving into her territory. The Emsagweni female was seen near her old den site in the Matshipiri River on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

**FLOCKFIELD FEMALE** **13 YEARS**  
CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(1 sighting)

There was one sighting of the female and cub in southeastern Charleston on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

**LOOKOUT FEMALE** **6 YEARS 5 MONTHS**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**Other leopards encountered:**

- **Males:** (6 sightings, 5 individuals)
  - There were six sightings of five different unidentified male leopards during April:
    - An unidentified male leopard was seen on the 8th near West Street Bridge.
    - A no ID male leopard was seen at Clarendon Dam on the 18th and the 21<sup>st</sup>.
    - The Maxabeni male leopard from the west was seen at Charleston North on the 20<sup>th</sup>.
    - A young male leopard was seen at Clarendon Dam on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
    - A large male leopard was seen near Stwise on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  
- **Females:** (8 sightings, 4 individuals)
  - There were three sightings of three separate unidentified female leopards in February:
    - A female leopard was seen at Clarendon on the 16<sup>th</sup>.
    - The Teardrop female was viewed on eight occasions in southern Charleston in April. She was seen with the cubs at their den near Charleston River Rocks along with the West Street male leopard (7<sup>th</sup>). The Teardrop Female is becoming an increasingly present feature in Charleston and has done well to raise the cubs so far who are currently approaching five months old.

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

<b>APRIL 2017</b>	<b>24</b>
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**CHEETAH**

There were three cheetah sightings in April. All three sightings were of the two cheetah brothers at Clarendon Dam. However on the 20<sup>th</sup> there was also a sighting of a female cheetah in the same area. She was very nervous and moved back into Kruger hastily.

**NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED**

<b>APRIL</b>	<b>3</b>
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**CAPE HUNTING DOGS**

Cape hunting dogs were seen on eleven days in April. On some of those days there was more than one pack seen so there was a total of thirteen Cape Hunting Dog sightings in April that consisted of 18 individuals.

Most of the sightings were of the large Toulon Pack that is 12 strong. They were seen on eight separate occasions and covered most of the property. The pack have lost several members in the last few months but are still a very formidable sight and were regularly seen making kills.

The other sightings were of two smaller packs consisting of three individuals each. These packs were seen on 5 separate occasions.

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

<b>APRIL</b>	<b>18</b>
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**CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS**

The large herbivore sightings are still relatively low as there was very good rains in the wet season that has just passed. There were no sightings of any large buffalo herds; all of the sightings were of individual or small groups of buffalo bulls.

There were numerous elephant sightings but much like the buffalo the elephant have yet to congregate in large herds. There were only 20 herds that were seen that had more than 20 individuals in them. This pattern of smaller large animal herds is consistent with the current season. But with little to no rain predicted for the coming months all this is sure to change.

**OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS**

There were numerous interesting mammal sightings including many hyena, honey badger, porcupine, civet and wildcat sightings. We were even treated to a spectacular sighting of a pangolin near the Matshipiri River on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

<b>TOTAL SIGHTINGS: APRIL 2017</b>	
<b>LION</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>LEOPARD</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>ELEPHANT</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>BUFFALO</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>CHEETAH</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CAPE HUNTING DOG</b>	<b>13</b>

**BIG 5 ANALYSIS: APRIL 2017**

	LION		LEOPARD		ELEPHANT				BUFFALO			
DATE	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS
					LH	H	INDIV.		LH	H	INDIV.	
1	6	1	3	3	1	3	2	6			3	2
2	8	1	2	2		3	3	5			12	4
3	14	2	4	4		2	1	3			6	1
4	8	1	1	1		1	1	2			1	1
5	1	3	2	2	1		1	2		1		1
6	16	3			2			2			2	1
7	1	1	5	2	2	1		3			9	2
8	12	2	7	4	4		1	5			3	1
9	14	2	1	1	2	3	1	6			8	1
10	14	2	3	3	1	2	2	5		1	8	3
11	5	1	3	3		5	1	6			14	4
12	2	1	1	1	1	2		3			13	3
13	6	1	2	2		3		3			2	1
14	2	1	1	1		1	1	2			5	1
15	8	2	1	1	1	2		3			3	2
16	8	2	4	4	1	1		2			1	1
17	5	1	3	3		2		2			1	1
18	6	1	4	4		3		3		1	4	4
19	8	1	1	1		3		3			5	1
20	7	1	8	6		3		3			6	2
21	20	5	5	5	1	4	2	7			4	3
22	9	3	6	4		2		2			1	1
23	8	1	5	3			4	3		1	5	2
24	8		4	2	1	3	1	5		1	1	2
25	6	1	6	4		1	1	2			7	3
26	14	2			1	2	2	4			7	4
27	8	1	4	2	1	4		5			4	2
28	17	4	5	3	1	4	1	6			3	2
29	18	4	4	4		3	1	4		1	1	2
30	10	4	2	2		1	1	2			1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>56</b>