

# MAY

## 2017 GAME REPORT



**MALAMALA GAME RESERVE GAME REPORT – MAY 2017**

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

<b>MAY WEATHER SUMMARY</b>					
<i>TEMPERATURE</i>					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	29	27	Maximum	84.2	80.6
Minimum	8	13	Minimum	46.4	55.4
<i>RAINFALL</i>					
Millimeters		Inches		Days of rain	
0		0		0	

\*AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS AS AT END OF MAY 2017

**LIONS**

**STYX PRIDE = 5**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>14 YEARS 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>9 YEARS 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>6 YEARS 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 ADULT MALES*</b>	<b>5 YEARS 3 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 CUBS</b>	<b>±7 MONTHS</b>

(3 sightings)

NORTHERN EYREFIELD

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

Members of the Styx pride were only seen on three occasions in May. The pride was represented by only two of the females and the two cubs. The third female is believed to be north of the boundary, where she has given birth. We are still unaware as to how many cubs she has but it would explain her absence. On all three occasions that members of the Styx pride were seen they were in the company of one or more of the Gowrie males.

**EYREFIELD PRIDE = 6**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>9 YEARS 10 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>5 YEARS 2 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 6 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 MALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 6 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 FEMALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 MALE CUB</b>	<b>1 YEAR 4 MONTHS</b>
MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, CHARLESTON	
(4 sightings)	

Members of the Eyrefield pride were seen on four occasions in May. The Eyrefield pride remained in Charleston for the majority of the month. The pressure from the Kambula pride as well as the nomadic Marthly males has caused the females to seek refuge away from the Sand River in order to keep their cubs safe. The future of the embattled pride is still very uncertain. With the Matshipiri males still showing no signs of heading in the direction of the Eyrefield pride, the responsibility of keeping the cubs safe lies solely with the two females.

**FOURWAYS PRIDE = 6**

<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>UNKNOWN AGE</b>
<b>1 SUB ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>6 YEARS 10 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 MALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 5 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 FEMALE CUBS</b>	<b>1 YEAR 5 MONTHS</b>
EASTERN FLOCKFIELD	
(6 sightings)	

The Fourways pride was seen on six consecutive days in May between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> in northern MalaMala, an area that hasn't seen the Fourways pride in some time. They moved south on the 17<sup>th</sup> and were seen in southeastern Flockfield before they moved back east into Kruger. The future of the Fourways pride is also quite uncertain, as the Matshipiri males have also not been seen with the pride since January.

**MARTHLY PRIDE = 11**

<b>2 ADULT FEMALES</b>	<b>14 YEARS 8 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>5 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>3 SUB-ADULT MALES*</b>	<b>3 YEARS 10 MONTHS</b>
<b>1 SUB-ADULT FEMALE</b>	<b>3 YEARS 9 MONTHS</b>
<b>2 CUBS</b>	<b>±11 MONTHS</b>
<b>3 CUBS</b>	<b>±10 MONTHS</b>
MARTHLY, MALAMALA	
<i>*Males are nomadic</i>	
(2 sightings)	

There were only two sightings of the members of the Marthly pride in May. Only one of those sightings was of the two females with their five cubs. They were viewed in central Marthly on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The cubs and female were all in good health. The second time the Marthly pride was represented on the property was on the 29<sup>th</sup> of the month, in the form of the three newly independent males who were seen in Charleston. This is the first time the males have been seen absent of their mother who is reportedly northwest of the property with a new litter of cubs. The three young males are an intimidating sight, they are large in stature and bold in nature. Hopefully Charleston will become a permanent home for them.

**KAMBULA PRIDE = 6**

**6 ADULT FEMALES**

**± 3 YEARS 10 MONTHS**

**MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD**

(23 sightings)

Members of the Kambula pride were seen on twenty-three occasions in May. The six females made regular trips from our western boundary, crossing the Sand River and then moving a few hundred meters east then moving back west again. The females were seen mainly in the company of the two Matshipiri males but after a hostile takeover from the two Avoca males the females spent the remainder of the month with the two young newcomers. The timing of this takeover could not have been worse as five of the lionesses were seen at West Street on the 26<sup>th</sup> with a number of newly born cubs. That afternoon the Avoca males were in the area and cubs were never seen again.

The Kambula pride has now begun courting their third coalition in the space of ten months. There doesn't seem to be a coalition who can keep up with these six tempestuous young lions. The worrying part of the newest takeover is that the majority of the pride is showing signs of pregnancy. Which means that it is another litter of cubs that are going to be lost to the cruel process of natural selection. Even more worrying is the fact that the two Avoca males are also very young and inexperienced. They face a tough battle keeping these females away from older larger coalitions, especially with the newly established Marthly males in the south and the Gowrie males making their presence felt further south than usual.

**CHARLESTON PRIDE = 5**

**1 ADULT FEMALE**

**12 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**5 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

**2 MALE CUBS**

**±12 YEARS 1 MONTH**

**CHARLESTON**

(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 MALES = 2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±7 YEARS**

**FLOCKFIELD, MALAMALA**

**DOMINANT OVER THE EYREFIELD AND FOURWAYS PRIDES**

*First encounter: April 2015*

(19 sightings)

May proved to be a very difficult month for the two Matshipiri males. The male with the 'Mohawk' was located with a broken leg in the early parts of the month. We are not aware of the cause of this injury, the male was still very mobile and was even seen mating with the injury. However he was unable to keep up with the rest of the Kambula pride and the other Matshipiri male was left to protect their territory and the females by himself. A task which proved far too great as two young males known as the Avoca males moved onto the property half way through the month.

The Avoca males set their sights on the Kambula females and the lone Matshipiri male was soon out of his depths. He was seen fleeing the young males on the 20<sup>th</sup>. He reunited with his injured brother and they moved northwards into Marthly, where they remained for the rest of the month.

Although the injury to the one male was untimely, it shows the constant game of risk and reward played by the predators. The future looked bright for the two males and they potentially sacrificed their only living cubs to invest in their relationship with the Kambula females. One would never have predicted this outcome but the gamble has not paid off for the Matshipiri males and they are now left picking up the pieces with nothing to show for their efforts.

**CLARENDON MALES = 2**

**2 ADULT MALES**

**±12 YEARS 4 MONTHS**

**MARTHLY, NORTHERN MALAMALA**

(0 sightings)

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**GOWRIE MALES = 4**

**1 ADULT MALE**

**± 6 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

**3 ADULT MALES**

**± 5 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

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

*First encounter: September 2015.*

(8 sightings)

Members of the Gowrie male coalition were only seen on eight occasions in May. Five of those sightings saw one or more of the males accompanying members of the Styx pride. These six sightings

were all in the vicinity of Mlowathi Dam. The cubs were present at five of these sightings and the males showed incredible patience as the cubs found joy in using the male's ears and tail as a toy

The other three sightings were of the males on a buffalo kill in Clarendon Open Area. Three of the Gowrie males were seen feeding on the buffalo for three consecutive days before moving north off the property.

**Other Lions Encountered:**

- A young unknown male was viewed on three occasions in Charleston.
- The two Avoca males made their way onto the property from Charleston and moved north. They were seen on five occasions on the property and ousted the Matshipiri males from their territory in the central parts of the property. They are suspected to have killed the cubs of the Kambula pride that were sired by the Matshipiri males and then preceded to mate with the Kambula lionesses. They have firmly laid their claim on MalaMala, for now.
- Four of the Mantimahle male lions (KNP) were seen at Flat Rocks on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

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

<b>MAY</b>	<b>43</b>
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**LEOPARDS:**

**BICYCLE CROSSING MALE**

**15 YEARS 3 MONTHS**

WESTERN MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD

(5 sightings)

The Bicycle Crossing male leopard was seen on five occasions in May. Unlike last month where he was seen as far north as Main Camp, he was seen in northern Charleston as well as central Flockfield on all five occasions. The Bicycle crossing male is still looking good despite his age, even after fifteen years on the front lines of leopard livelihood. Each time he is encountered we are equally surprised and grateful to still have him with us.. He was seen on three occasions in his usual spot around Charleston North and the Rock Drift Donga. He only every went as far north as the Treehouse, when he was seen on the 30<sup>th</sup> walking around his former territory

**WEST STREET MALE**  
CHARLESTON  
(4 sightings)

**8 YEARS 2 MONTHS**

There were four sightings of the West Street male in May. The bulk of the sightings were concentrated around the first week of the month when he made an uncharacteristic move into central Flockfield. The West Street male moved as far north as the Borehole, which is an area normally frequented by the Bicycle Crossing male. The move north could possibly be a move to explore new territory that may soon come vacant as the Bicycle Crossing male reaches his twilight years.

**TREEHOUSE MALE**  
WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, MARTHLY  
(9 sightings)

**± 7 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

The Treehouse male leopard was seen on nine occasions in May. He continued his trend of moving consistently throughout the month. He was never seen in the same location for more than a day at a time. The Treehouse male was first located at Maxims Lookout on the 5<sup>th</sup> with the remains of an impala kill, the following day he was nowhere to be seen. He was only located two days later in central Marthly. A week later he appeared at Confluence Crossing where he moved northwards. Once again he did not stick around for very long.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> he was again located moving onto our reserve at Flockfield Tower in the evening before moving back west. On the 21<sup>st</sup> he moved back onto the property in the same area and managed to catch a grey duiker, the duiker never lasted long as the Treehouse male was gone the following day, only to be relocated two days later in the Manyeleti River. The pattern continued as two days went by before the Treehouse male was seen at West Street Bridge and again two days later at Confluence Crossing.

**ACCIPITER MALE**  
MALAMALA  
(1 sighting)

**± 6 YEARS 9 MONTHS**

The elusive Accipiter male leopard was only located on one occasion in May. He was briefly seen at Buffalo Bush Dam on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The sighting lasted about 30 seconds as he slipped stealthily into the bush without as much as a 'bye or leave.'

**SPLIT ROCK MALE**  
EYREFIELD, MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD  
*Son of the Ostrich Koppies female, independent latter half of 2015*  
(4 sightings)

**2 YEARS 11 MONTHS**

The Split Rock male leopard was noticeably more present on the property in May. He was seen on four

separate occasions in May. The young male leopard seems to overlap with the Accipiter male leopard's territory but he does a very good job of avoiding the larger, more dominant male leopard. Although sightings of the soft natured Split Rock male are few and far between, the increase in sightings in May is good sign.

All four sightings of the Split Rock male were in the vicinity of the Matshipiri River between its confluence of the Sand River and Emsagwen Waterhole. The awkward build of the adolescent male suggests that he will be a large leopard one day.

**SENEGAL BUSH MALE**

**4 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

EYREFIELD, MARTHLY, MALAMALA

*Brother of the Quarantine male leopard from the North*

(7 sightings)

The Senegal Bush male leopard increased his presence on the property in the month of May. He was encountered on two more occasions than in the previous month. And his debut appearance for the month of May was another remarkable sighting whereby he was joined by both the Piccadilly and Sibuye female leopards at Mlowathi Pans on the 11<sup>th</sup>. This is the second time in three weeks that the trio was seen together.

The Senegal Bush Male was seen again on the 16<sup>th</sup> in northern Eyrefield where he was viewed for three consecutive days slowly moving southwest to Bicycle Crossing and then he continued westwards off the property. On the 24<sup>th</sup> he was back on the property where he was heard announcing his presence at Campbell Koppies in true splendor. He continued north and was again located at Mlowathi Dam on the 26<sup>th</sup> and then back at Campbell Koppies the following day.

**KIKILEZI FEMALE**

**(DECEASED) 15 YEARS 7 MONTHS**

**1 MALE CUB**

**1 YEAR 1 MONTH**

**1 FEMALE CUB**

**1 YEAR 1 MONTH**

WESTERN MALAMALA, WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

(5 sightings of female, 8 sightings of the cubs)

May saw the end of a legacy, after a decade and a half of some of the most memorable sightings and interactions anyone could ever ask for, the Kikilezi female leopard was sadly lost this month. Her body was found on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. She leaves behind two cubs, which she had spent the last thirteen months with, evading the very threat that would ultimately cost her, her life.

The two cubs were found near Main Camp after their mother's death. The odds are now firmly stacked against them. The coming months will be a true test of every instinct that they inherited from their mother.



**PICADILLY FEMALE****3 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLIY

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

(6 sightings)

The Piccadilly female was seen on six occasions in May. She was first encountered on the 3<sup>rd</sup> opposite Main Camp; she was viewed for the next three days as she moved northwards to Mlowati Koppies and then across the Mlowati River. Six days later she was seen again with her sister and the Senegal Bush male at Mlowathi Pans where she was seen mating with the male alongside her sister. She was not located for another ten days after her that and finally appeared at Bicycle Crossing on the 21<sup>st</sup>. She moved southeast and was located again two days later in the core of her territory at Fred's Tree where she sat eagerly observing the impala grazing at Piccadilly Pans.

**SIBUYE FEMALE****3 YEARS 6 MONTHS**

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLIY

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

(2 sightings)

There were only two sightings of the Sibuye female in the month of May. She was first seen mating with the Senegal Bush male at Mlowati pans alongside her sister. Four days later she was located with the fresh remains of an impala kill on the eastern bank of the Mlowati River south of the Gowrie Boundary.

**TAMBOTI FEMALE****9 YEARS 8 MONTHS**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

(7 sightings)

The Tamboti female was seen on seven occasions in May, all west of the Sand River in-between Main Camp and Rattray's Camp.

**ISLAND FEMALE****4 YEARS 1 MONTH**

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

*Daughter of the Tamboti female, independent first quarter of 2015*

(7 sightings)

The Island female leopard was seen on seven occasions in May. She has become quite a regular feature at Main Camp where she was seen on three occasions during the month. She also was seen outside her know territory on two occasions when we located her near Fred's Tree on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup>. She was also seen north of Emsagwen Waterhole on the 30<sup>th</sup>, an area that she has never been seen in the past.

The other two sightings of the Island female were at West Street Bridge on the 24<sup>th</sup> and at Donald's Crossing on the 27<sup>th</sup>, both areas that she is very familiar with. However it is difficult to understand why she has been seen so far outside of her territory, with hope the coming months will shed more light.

**EMSAGWENI FEMALE**  
MALAMALA  
(0 sightings)

**7 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**FLOCKFIELD FEMALE**  
CENTRAL & EASTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

**13 YEARS 1 MONTH**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**LOOKOUT FEMALE**  
WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON  
(0 sightings)

**6 YEARS 5 MONTHS**

There were no confirmed sightings during the reported period.

**Other leopards encountered:**

- **Males:** (9 sightings, 4 individuals)
  - There were nine sightings of four different unidentified male leopards during May:
    - The Quarantine male leopard was seen on five days in May. He was seen mainly at Clarendon where he was seen mating with an unidentified young female leopard.
    - A no ID male leopard was seen in the Manyeleti River on the 14<sup>th</sup>.
    - An unidentified male leopard was seen in Charleston near Beaumont's Camp feeding on the remains of impala lamb on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>.
    - The Maxabeni male leopard from the west was seen at Charleston North on the 31<sup>st</sup>.
- **Females:** (13 sightings, 7 individuals)
  - There were thirteen sightings of seven separate unidentified female leopards in May:

- There was an unidentified female viewed in Charleston on the 1<sup>st</sup>.
- An unidentified female was seen near Paddy's Pools on the 11<sup>th</sup>.
- There was an unidentified female leopard seen at Fred's Tree on the 13<sup>th</sup>.
- A young female leopard was seen mating with the Quarantine male leopard at Clarendon Dam on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The Calabash female was seen at Charleston North on the 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The Teardrop female was seen on seven occasions in May. She was viewed with her two cubs that moved between Calabash Crossing and Charleston Drive.

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

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

Cheetah were viewed on five days in May, the sightings comprised of four individual cheetah. The two cheetah brothers were seen at Clarendon on four occasions. There was a sighting of a young male cheetah at the Parking Bay on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The relaxed young male has been seen on several occasions at the same spot. There was also a flash sighting of a female cheetah near Main Camp on the same day.

**NUMBER OF DIFFERENT CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED**

<b>MAY</b>	<b>4</b>
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**CAPE HUNTING DOGS**

Cape Hunting dogs were seen on four days in May. They consisted of sightings of two separate packs. The first is a pack of 11 from the south that is know as the Toulon Pack. They were viewed on four days in May. They were seen on Charleston on all four occasions. The second pack is a pack of three that come from the north that were only seen on one day in May. They consist of two males and a female who brought down a large bushbuck at Emsagwen Waterhole on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

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

<b>MAY</b>	<b>14</b>
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**CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS**

There was an increased presence in large herbivore sightings in May. As winter slowly starts to set in there is a greater concentration of animals coming down to the Sand River on a daily basis. There was a total of 103 elephant sightings and 56 buffalo sightings in May.

**OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTINGS**

There were numerous sightings of hyena, as the den site in Charleston remains very active. There were also several honey badger, porcupine and civet sightings as well as a rare sighting of a Meller's mongoose and a pair of cape clawless otters!

<b>TOTAL SIGHTINGS: MAY 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>4</b>
<b>CAPE HUNTING DOG</b>	<b>14</b>

**BIG 5 ANALYSIS: MAY 2017**

	LION		LEOPARD		ELEPHANT				BUFFALO			
DATE	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS	SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS	ANIMALS			SIGHTINGS
					LH	H	INDIV.		LH	H	INDIV.	
1	1	1	2	2		1		1			2	1
2	8	2	5	3		1		1			1	1
3	8	1	2	2	1	1		2			2	1
4	10	2	1	1		2		2			5	1
5	8	1	5	5		3	1	4			3	2
6	15	2	4	2		2		2		1		1
7	6	1	5	5		3		3			2	1
8	8	1	2	2	1	2		3			2	1
9	8	1	2	2	1			1			2	1
10	9	3	2	2		1		1		2		2
11	2	1	11	5		3		3			2	1
12	4	1	1	1		3		3		1		1
13	4	1	1	1		1	1	2			1	1
14	6	1	1	1		1	1	2			4	2
15	16	4	2	2	1	1	1	3			2	2
16	3	2	3	3	1	2		3			1	1
17	14	3	5	4			2	1		3		3
18	14	4	6	3		4	2	6		1	1	2
19	14	2	4	2		3		3		1		1
20	6	1	4	2		3		3			6	2
21	9	5	3	3		3	1	4			4	1
22	11	3	6	4		5		5		1		1
23	7	2	7	5		3	2	4		1	2	2
24	8	2	4	4		1	1	2			4	1
25	6	2	2	2		4		4	1		1	2
26	11	3	2	2		2	2	4		1	1	2
27	7	3	5	5	3	1	1	5			2	2
28	11	4	2	2		2	1	3		2		2
29	9	3	1	1		4		4		1	1	2
30	8	3	5	5	2	3		5		1	4	3
31	8	2	5	3		1		1			3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>