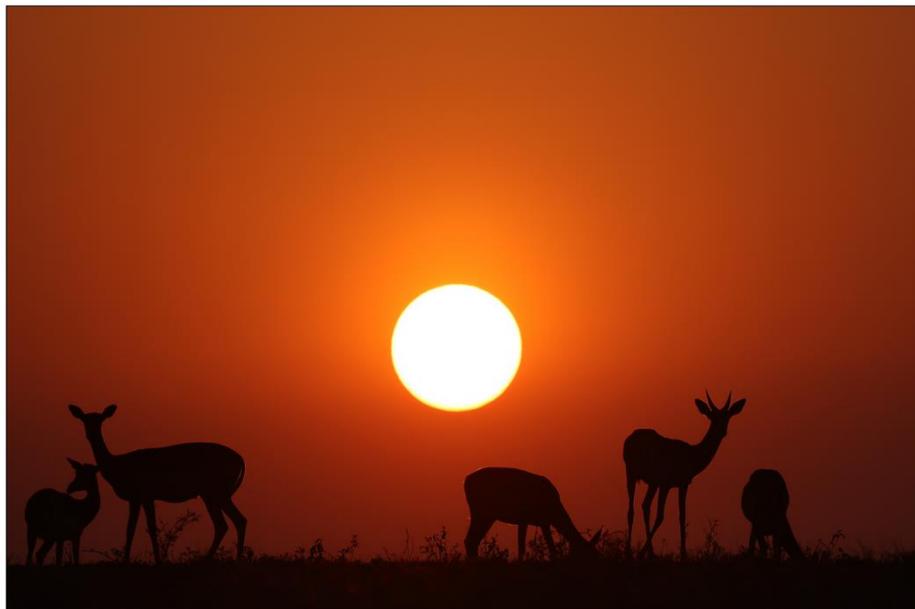




Game Report



Silhouetted impala on the Airstrip by Ranger Jaco Joubert

MalaMala Game Reserve
September 2022

It's all about the wildlife!

THE MONTH'S WEATHER SUMMARY					
Temperature					
Celsius (°C)			Fahrenheit (°F)		
	Actual	Average		Actual	Average
Maximum	35	29	Maximum	95	85
Minimum	8	16	Minimum	46	60
Rainfall					
Millimetres		Inches		Days of rain	
36		1.41		3	

TOTAL SIGHTINGS	
Lion	74
Leopard	127
Elephant	175
Buffalo	60
Cheetah	4
Cape Hunting Dog	10

**Sightings are tallied by day and not by drive. E.g., an individual leopard seen during the morning and afternoon drive on the same day is regarded as a single sighting.*

KILL STATS	
Lion	3 giraffes, 2 zebra, 1 impala
Leopard	12 impala, 1 waterbuck, 1 bushbuck
Cheetah	1 impala
Cape Hunting Dog	2 impala

**AGES ARE APPROXIMATIONS*

LION PRIDES

THE KAMBULA PRIDE = 21

3 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 6 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 3 MONTHS
6 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 1 MONTH
5 SUB ADULT MALES	± 4 YEARS 1 MONTH
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 4 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	3 YEARS 4 MONTHS
2 CUBS	1 YEAR 6 MONTHS

MALAMALA, FLOCKFIELD, NORTHERN CHARLESTON

(34 sightings)

The groupings we suggested last month held true for this month too. As a result, we continue to refer to the fragments of this pride in groups A – C (see August Game Report for the composition breakdown).

Mating activities continue between Kambula Group C and the Ndhzenza males this month.

On the 1st, Kambula Group B was in Jakkalsdraai Open Area, while Kambula Group C was just east of them, keeping the company of the Ndhzenza males.

On the 23rd, Kambula Group A had a giraffe bull kill north of Trollip's Camp. This month, giraffes seemed a popular choice as Kambula Group C, and the Ndhzenza males shared a giraffe bull carcass north of Charleston Rock on the 28th.

Kambula Group A are moving their cubs further from where we expect to see them, and more haphazardly too. This month they were seen as far northwest as the Causeway and as far southeast as Ivory Pan. In a heated interaction, they attempted to join in feeding from a giraffe carcass that Kambula Group C and the Ndhzenza males shared north of Charleston Rock. Unfortunately, it was not the warm family reunion we were hoping for. Despite contact-calling, Kambula Group A was met with hostility and chased into the Kruger National Park.

THE MARTHLY PRIDE = 1

1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	3 YEARS 6 MONTHS
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MARTHLY

(4 sightings)

The Marthly lioness made her return to Marthly on the 15th of this month. Following her return, she was seen another three times on the property, after which her pride was named. Unfortunately, she was not with the Mangeni lioness in any of her appearances.

THE NKAHUMA PRIDE = 18

1 ADULT FEMALE	9 YEARS 2 MONTHS
3 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 3 MONTHS
4 SUB ADULT MALES	± 3 YEARS 3 MONTHS
2 SUB ADULT FEMALES	± 3 YEARS 3 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT MALE	2 YEARS 9 MONTHS
7 CUBS	± 1 YEAR 5 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

(11 sightings)

The full complement of this pride, joined by the Northern Avoca males, began the giraffe-eating trend on the 6th when they had 80% of a giraffe bull at the Sausage Spot. The 20 lions made short work of their large kill; by the 8th, they were lounging around Mlowathi Dam. The three females and seven cubs were with the two Northern Avoca males at the Sausage Spot again on the 13th.

On the 24th and 25th, all 18 lions were east of Stwise; they rested before killing an impala ram at nightfall on the 26th.

THE SAND RIVER PRIDE = 14

2 ADULT FEMALES	± 9 YEARS 2 MONTHS
2 ADULT FEMALES	± 4 YEARS 2 MONTHS
1 SUB ADULT FEMALE	2 YEARS 8 MONTHS
3 SUB ADULTS (1 FEMALE & 2 MALES)	2 YEARS 1 MONTH
6 CUBS	1 YEAR 1 MONTH

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

(4 sightings)

We recorded four sightings of this pride this month. On the 8th, all 14 members were in F-Bend Open Area. On the 10th, one sub-adult male and four sub-adult females were at Boomers Crossing. These sub-adults moved west overnight and joined the rest of the pride around Rocky Crossing on the 11th. The last sighting of this pride was on the 19th when all of them were in F-Bend Open Area.

THE TORCHWOOD PRIDE = 20

7 ADULT FEMALES	UNKOWN AGES
6 ADULT FEMALES	± 6 YEARS 8 MONTHS
7 CUBS	± 2 YEARS 1 MONTH

EASTERN EYREFIELD

(4 sightings)

Seven members of this pride were seen around Clarendon Corner on the 1st. Two lionesses and five cubs were seen north of Buffalo Bush Dam on the 5th. Two females were at Clarendon Dam on the 26th. On the 29th, three lionesses and seven cubs were around Clarendon Corner again.

MALE LIONS

THE NDHZENGA MALES = 4

2 ADULT MALES ± 7 YEARS 7 MONTHS

2 ADULT MALES ± 7 YEARS 2 MONTHS

WESTERN CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Styx and Kambula Prides.

First Encountered on MalaMala September 2020

(27 sightings)

The Ndhzenge males continue to mate with the females from the Kambula pride. This month 16 of the 27 sightings of these males were with lionesses from the Kambula pride. The male with the club foot and injuries to his hind quarters was recorded more with his coalition partners this month than in recent months.

On the 18th, the male with the club foot was roaring at the base of a jackalberry tree that held the Island female and her hoisted bushbuck kill on the western bank of the Sand River, south of West Street. On the 19th, three males (excluding the individual with the abdominal protrusion) trailed a herd of buffalo from Confluence Crossing to eastern MalaMala; they were unsuccessful in their pursuit. While the two 'unblemished' males were tolerant of his presence, they were notably uncomfortable, scent marking and positioning themselves between the lionesses and their coalition mate.

All four males fed on the remains of a giraffe kill with members of the Kambula pride north of Ivory Pan on the 30th.

THE NORTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES ± 9 YEARS 3 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

Dominant over the Nkuhuma pride.

First encountered in late 2019.

(7 sightings)

Accumulatively, we saw these males one week of this month. They made their presence known at a giraffe kill they shared with the Nkuhuma pride around the Sausage Spot on the 6th. They were seen for the two days following the giraffe kill, once twice at the Sausage Spot and later at Mlowathi Dam.

On the 24th, one male was with the Nkuhuma Pride east of Stwise. The lions remained in the same area for 48 hours when the second male in this coalition joined them.

On the 26th, they participated in the killing of an impala ram southwest of Mlowathi Dam. Members of the Nkuhuma pride were present too.

THE SOUTHERN AVOCA MALES = 2

2 ADULT MALES

± 9 YEARS 7 MONTHS

SOUTHERN CHARLESTON

Dominant over the Sand River Pride.

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve

(3 sightings)

The first sighting of these males was on the 5th when they were together south of Tjellahanga Pans. The two males finished a young zebra kill on the 11th at Charleston Rock. On the last day of the month, one male was alone at Boomers Crossing.

Other Lions Encountered:

- In exciting news, the **Gowrie male** returned to MalaMala on the 9th. He was found south of the Causeway with his offspring from the Nkuhuma pride – the **Nkuhuma male**. These two lions were viewed for 48 hours before they disappeared again.
- The **Styx pride** were viewed on Toulon on the 13th.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LIONS ENCOUNTERED	76 (29 cubs)
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LEOPARDS

FEMALE LEOPARDS:

THE ISLAND FEMALE

9 YEARS 7 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, SOUTHERN MALAMALA

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

Mother of the Drum Crossing female.

(7 sightings)

On the morning of the 5th, the Island female was around Styx Rocks. Later that day, she fought with the Three River female west of West Street. However, their dispute was short-lived as the Maxim's male intervened.

She had a bushbuck female hoisted in a jackalberry tree south of West Street on the 17th. She was in the same area on the 18th, but she had the unwanted company of the injured Ndhzenza male who scavenged scraps beneath her.

On the 27th and 28th, she mated with the Maxim's male in the Sand River between Old Wildebeest Crossing and West Street. Even though the pair were observed copulating, the Maxim's male appeared to make every effort to evade the Island female.

Over time, it will be interesting to observe whether the Island female will continue to frequent the area around West Street or if she will move back east.

THE NKOVENI FEMALE

10 YEARS 1 MONTH

2 FEMALE CUBS

1 YEAR 8 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA & SOUTHERN MARTHLY

Daughter of the Mashaba female, independent early 2014.

Mother of the Plaque Rock female.

(23 sightings, 5 of female, 5 of female and cub/s, 13 of cub/s)

Another month has passed, and still, the Nkoveni female shows no sign of encouraging her daughters to disperse.

On the 1st, the female and the 3:2 cub fed on a bushbuck ewe south of Sand Pit Crossing. The female and one cub were outside MalaMala Camp on the 2nd. On the 4th and 5th, the 3:2 cub loitered around camp alone. The three leopards were together on the 7th at Old Wildebeest Crossing. The female and the 2:2 cub had an impala ram kill around the Causeway on the 11th. By the following day, the 3:2 cub had joined them in the area. Both cubs were without their mother when they played in the rain north of Maxim's Lookout on the 13th. All three leopards were at Bicycle Crossing on the 16th. The last sighting of the month was of the two cubs on the 30th, east of the Airstrip.

THE SIBUYE FEMALE

8 YEARS 8 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD

*Daughter of the Kikilezi female, independent first quarter of 2016.**Mother of the Tlebe Rocks female, Langa female & Xaxa male.*

(4 sightings)

We enjoyed three days of stable viewing of this female from the 24th – 26th as she had a hoisted impala ewe in the Mlowathi River, south of the Gowrie Boundary. She was seen again on the 27th, east of Senegal Bush.

THE DRUM CROSSING FEMALE

2 YEAR 1 MONTH

SOUTHERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Island female, independent February 2022.

(3 sightings)

Your eyes are not deceiving you; this month, we named the daughter of the Island female! Henceforth, she will be known as the Drum Crossing female.

The first sighting for the month was on the 14th when she was northeast of Maurice's Pan. She attempted to stalk a herd of impala on the 25th when she was west of Matshapiri Open Area.

While her mother spends time around West Street, the Drum Crossing female continues to make herself comfortable in the core of her mother's territory.

THE TLEBE ROCKS FEMALE

4 YEARS 8 MONTHS

MALE CUB

10 MONTHS

CENTRAL & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Daughter of the Sibuye Female, independent second quarter 2019.

(3 sightings of female)

The first time this leopard was seen was on the 20th when she was north of Lower Mlowathi Crossing. On the 22nd, she waited patiently in the rain as the Ngoboswan male fed on a hoisted impala ram she coveted. The last time she was seen this month was on the 24th when she was north of Campbell Koppies.

Her male cub was not seen again this month.

THE PLAQUE ROCK FEMALE

4 YEARS 6 MONTHS

WESTERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Nkoveni female, independent last quarter of 2019.

(1 sighting)

The Plaque Rock female was seen interacting (interfering, if you will) with the Maxim's male and Piccadilly female, who were mating around the Broken Dam on the 17th. So, the three leopards were seen briefly before crossing our western boundary.

THE LOOKOUT FEMALE
CUB

± 12 YEARS 8 MONTHS
5 MONTHS

NORTHERN FLOCKFIELD

First encountered on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

Mother of the Kapen female & the Redhawk male.

(1 sighting, 1 of female, 0 of female and cub)

The only day this female was seen was on the 22nd when she was hunting steenbok west of Styx Crossing. Unfortunately, due to heavy rain, we could not off-road to follow her, and the sighting was short-lived.

THE THREE RIVERS FEMALE
MALE CUB

6 YEARS 5 MONTHS
1 YEAR 2 MONTHS

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD, WESTERN MALAMALA

Daughter of the Kikilezi female, orphaned on 22nd May 2017.

(15 sightings, 9 of female, 5 of female and cub, 1 of the cub)

Both mother and cub were seen on the 3rd; they finished off an impala ewe west of the Airstrip. On the 5th, this female found herself in a fight with the Island female. Luckily for her, the Maxim's male leapt to her defence.

Staring giraffe tipped rangers off to the mother and cub who had an impala ewe stashed in a mahogany tree north of the Old Flockfield Boma Crossing on the 17th. The pair fed on this kill for the next 24 hours. Then, on the 20th, the cub killed a young impala ram, on which the two leopards fed south of the Airstrip.

The last sighting of this female was on the 27th when she was southwest of Confluence Crossing.

THE PICCADILLY FEMALE
DAUGHTER

8 YEARS 8 MONTHS
2 YEARS 6 MONTHS

WESTERN EYREFIELD, MARTHLY

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

(8 sightings)

On the 6th, this female had an impala ewe hoisted on the southern bank of the Manyelethi River, east of Paraffin Drift. The next day her kill was commandeered by the Flat Rock male. Both leopards remained in the area until the carcass had been finished.

She continued to venture out of her territory this month and was on West Street Bridge on the 15th. The Maxim's male was also with her. The following two days, the pair was seen mating frequently.

The last time she was seen was on the 23rd when she was sniffing around Mlowathi Koppies.

MALE LEOPARDS

THE MAXIM'S MALE

± 8 YEARS 1 MONTH

WESTERN FLOCKFIELD & MALAMALA

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in early 2019.

(15 sightings)

A year ago, we never would have believed there would be a month where sightings of this male would be recorded for 15 days. This month proved otherwise.

All of the sightings of this male took place on the Western Bank and in the Sand River between Elephant Slide Crossing and Marthly Crossing. On the 5th, he sprung to the defence of the Three Rivers female during an altercation with the Island female at West Street. On the 16th and 17th, he mated with the Piccadilly female in the Sand River between Maxim's Lookout and Marthly Crossing. He was with the Island female on the 25th – 27th, but mating was only recorded on the 28th, north of Maxim's Lookout. Interestingly, he was not forthcoming in mating with the Island female despite her persistence.

Hopefully, his recent mating antics have caused him to be more comfortable around cars, and we might enjoy quality sightings of this male in the future.

THE NGOBOSWAN MALE

4 YEARS 10 MONTHS

MARTHLY & WESTERN EYREFIELD

Son of the Emsagweni female, independent late 2019.

(10 sightings)

The first time this male was seen was on the 8th when he was at Lower Mlowathi Crossing. He was west of Ostrich Koppies on the 10th. He finished an impala carcass on the 15th in the Nwana Nonanshameni Donga and was on the Causeway on the 16th. On the 21st and 22nd, he had an impala ram beside the road east of Piccadilly Triangle during the first seasonal rains. The Tlebe Rocks female joined him in the area, but he refused to let her feed on the carcass. The last sighting of this male was on the 29th when he was atop a termite mound northeast of Mlowathi Dam.

THE ACCIPITER MALE

± 12 YEARS 1 MONTH

EASTERN & CENTRAL MALAMALA & FLOCKFIELD

First seen on MalaMala Game Reserve in late 2015.

(4 sightings)

In spite of the fact that this male is getting on in years, the Accipiter male continues to exert a presence east of the Sand River.

On the 10th, he was on patrol at Flockfield Lookout. He was approximately two kilometres east of his previous position the next day when he was south of the Hogvaal Donga. On the 14th, he was in the northern reaches of his territory, at Plank's Pan. Finally, he was at Buffalo Pan's on the 26th, where he spent the day sleeping in the shade of a tamboti tree.

THE EYREFIELD MALE

4 YEARS 10 MONTHS

NOMADIC (Eastern Eyrefield and eastern MalaMala)

Son of the Emsagweni female, independent late 2019.

(0 sightings)

This young male was not seen on MalaMala this month. However, we continue receiving reports from neighbouring reserves about his transient presence in the west.

THE SPLIT ROCK MALE

8 YEARS 11 MONTHS

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

(3 sightings)

The first of three days this male was seen was on the 2nd when he was south of New Rocks. On the 10th, he gave guides and guests a heart attack when he chased a cub of the Tengile female south of Calabash Crossing. The last sighting of this prominent male was on the 27th when he was in F-Bend Open Area.

Other Leopards Encountered:

- The **River Rocks female** was seen on four days this month. The most noteworthy sighting included her being treed by the Kambula Group A, south of Jakkalsdraai Open Area, on the 14th.
- 10 sightings were recorded of the **Tengile female** and/or her cubs this month. The female seems to be keeping her cubs around the Sand River south of Calabash Crossing. On the 10, one cub was chased by the Split Rock male when all four leopards were around Calabash Crossing. Both cubs were seen four times after their close encounter with the Split Rock male.
- The **daughter of the Piccadilly female** was seen once this month. She was west of Kigelia Crossing on the 3rd.
- The **Xivindzi female** was seen twice this month. She was in the same area as the Tengile female on the 16th, when both leopards were around KK Crossing. The next time she was seen was at sunset on the 18th, south of Tjellahanga Pans.
- The **Inyathini male** was seen at Princess Alice Pans on the 2nd.
- We enjoyed five days of viewing the **Redhawk male**. The best of the five sightings was on the 24th when he barged into a hyena-feeding frenzy. Hyenas had found a new-born giraffe calf that had died. Although the Redhawk male ran in and attempted to steal the carcass, he was unsuccessful.
- The **Flat Rock male** was seen six times this month. He stole an impala kill from the Piccadilly female on the 7th. On the 11th, he was on Elephant Rock. On the 12th, he was west of the Confluence of the Three Rivers. He was east of Stwise on the 15th. The last time he was seen was on the 28th when he was at Elephant Rock Lookout.
- The **Hanyile male** was on Toulon on the 13th, where he had a waterbuck kill. The next time he was seen was on the 23rd when he was around Flat Rocks.
- On the 23rd, the **N'weti male** was north of River Rocks. On the 26th, he was southwest of Jakkalsdraai Open Area. The last sighting of this male was on the 29th when he posed on River Rocks.
- An **unidentified female** was north of the Old Borehole on the 20th.

- The **Mondzo female** was found hunting impala in Clarendon Corner on the morning of the 20th.
- The **Mlowathi male** was in the Nwana Nonanshameni Donga on the 20th.
- A weary **unknown male** was on Styx Rocks on the 24th.
- On the last day of the month, the **Kapen female** was found on patrol near New Rocks.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LEOPARDS ENCOUNTERED	34 (7 cubs)
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CHEETAH

Four sightings were recorded of cheetah this month. The mother and son, whom we see frequently, were at Princes Alice Pans on the 13th, where they had an impala ram kill. The same individuals were seen on the 14th, and 15th, on the Western Bank. The last sighting of this duo was on the 17th when they were on the Airstrip.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHEETAH ENCOUNTERED	2 (1 cub)
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CAPE HUNTING DOGS

This month, sightings of **Cape hunting dogs** were recorded on **10** days.

The **Toulon pack** have become a spectacle in the south, with 20 adults and 21 pups moving together.

All eight members of the **Ottawa pack** were seen together twice this month. They killed an impala in Rattray's Camp on the 8th. This pack returned on the 26th and killed an impala on the Old Airstrip.

Two Cape hunting dogs were seen north of Senegal Bush on the 14th. Another two were seen around the 5-Star Junction on the 26th.

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAPE HUNTING DOGS ENCOUNTERED	49 (21 pups)
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CAPE BUFFALO AND ELEPHANTS

61 cape buffalo and **175 elephant** sightings were recorded in September.

Even with the first seasonal rains falling, we recorded 17 large herds of Cape buffalo on the property this month. The bulk of the buffalo sightings continue to consist of small bachelor groups.

Other sightings of interest

The **HYENA DEN SITE** on the MalaMala/Flockfield Boundary east of Hogvaal road is still active.

The **HYENA DEN SITE** north of the Sausage Spot is active again. Rangers found a female and two cubs; one is approximately four weeks, and the other is six weeks.

A **SERVAL** was seen after sunset at the Windmill on the 11th.

A **SOUTHERN AFRICAN PYTHON** was around Zebra Skull on the 20th.

An **AFRICAN WILD CAT** was east of Beaumont's Camp on the 29th.