

## Herewith the latest sightings report from Kwando: November 2008

Cool summer rains have brought new life to the Kwando camps as the fauna and flora have suddenly burst with energy. The days have become cooler and the nights alive with new life.

### Lagoon

The local lagoon pride of six female Lions have provided guests with wonderful sightings feasting on young Zebra, the small pride have been hunting around the shallow floodplains and towards water cut road. Guests and guides have managed to track the small pride on a daily basis and witness them taking more than three Zebra this month. To every ones surprise the one day after a long hour of tracking the pride the guide and guests found the pride feeding on a young Elephant, trackers found signs all around the kill of an enormous struggle between predator and prey.

The three brother Cheetah have been hanging around the Lagoon area over the past month and have been a regular sighting by the guests and have managed to link up with a resident female. The group has been sighted regularly towards Pangolin and River road.

The pack of eight Wild Dog that produced the six pups late in the year have been doing extremely well and have been a regular sighting by the guests. The pack seem to be spending a lot of time in the Mopane woodland as the game has moved from the thick river forests to the sweet veldt of the Mopane scrubland. Guest had an amazing sighting of the pack as they were on the hunt with a herd of Buffalo and how the adults worked as a unit with extreme measures of communication and skill they were able to separate the herd and attempt the kill. With great success and the young pups following behind, they brought a medium sized Buffalo to the ground.

With the break of the rains the Elephant herds have reduced in numbers congregating along the river, with the rain pans in the Mopane woodland they have slowly started to dispersed into the

back country of the concession. The majority of the Elephant have been young and old bulls in bachelor herds.

"STOP," shouted one of the trackers on the one morning game drive as the Guide thought it was just a log on the road that had been pushed by Elephant, but to his surprise the tracker had recognized it was an enormous African Rock Python lying across the road. Guests were stunned to see the size of the snake and took a few pictures as the large snake moved into the bushes.

A lone Hyena had a rough time the one evening as he tried to scavenge from the Wild Dog kill. The pack had made the kill late during the day so were still busy feeding on the kill as the lone Hyena came along. There were barks from the pack as the pups fled into the bushes and the Alpha female led the chase with the whole pack behind her tail, the lone Hyena immediately turned and ran as fast as he could directly into the bush as the pack hastily approached.

Bullfrogs have emerged from their hibernation and are now a common sight around the rain pans, the beautiful green and yellow markings are truly a spectacular sight to see as the enormous frog hunts around the rain pans.

### Lebala

An amazing month for Lion sightings as there are some prides splitting and joining other prides and two large males roaming the area creating a panic amongst the prides. The two males have been roaring through out the night on the Lebala plains sending the pride of seven females to join up with the coalition of four males and heading south from Johns pan. A second pride in the area of two males and six females found towards the Selinda floodplains have not moved any closer to the Lebala area as the two males are on constant patrol. The one game drive found one of the males by himself constantly roaring to find his partner, the guests witnessed some spectacular scenes as the large male bellowed into the night bringing shivers down every animals spine.

After a few hours of tracking the guests found a highly mobile and energetic male Leopard heading into the Kalahari apple leaf scrubland, the large healthy cat was followed by the guests patrolling the area and spraying scent marks on pinpointed trees. With a late afternoon thunderstorm the cat was treed for the rest of the day as he climbed up a large Knobthorn to avoid getting too wet.

Two Impala kills were witnessed by the guest the one day, the morning game drive found the guest with the pack of Wild Dogs hunting through the Mopane woodland and then onto the floodplains until they managed to kill a young Impala, after a great morning the guest retired back to the camp for breakfast and a midday siesta and then return to the pack and with great excitement that afternoon. The pack still eager and hungry attempted another kill on a herd of Impala and lucked out with a second kill that day.

A Hippo fight in the lagoon at the back of Lebala camp has resulted in the death of an old bull, the fight took a few days and nights as the guest could hear the gruelling clash of the two huge beasts. The defeated bull managed to get out of the lagoon but did not manage to survive his injuries and was found a day later to the north west of the camp. The scavengers were there immediately as they called one another to the Hippo, the clan of Hyena congregated around the carcass feeding for week as they managed to keep the Vultures and Jackal at bay.

African Wild Cat have been a common sighting this month by the guests during the day and the night drives, Honey badgers are still a favourite by the guests who see them digging and scavenging in trees and bushes.

Most plains game have calved their young this month and are continuing with some only a few hours old, from the Zebra to the Steen buck. Tiny Leopard Tortoise's have been seen regularly since the rains have broken, just an amazing amount of new life.

### Kwara and Little Kwara

Buffalo are seen in huge herds during this last month in the Kwara concession and have been on the menu for the Lion in the area, fortnightly kills have been made by the coalition of seven males and on one drive the guests followed the pride from the back of camp just to the west of Kwara hippo pool and witnessed the pride kill two buffalo on one hunt. The morning drive brought great sightings and the late game drive into the night found the guests in between a huge clash of eternal enemies the Hyena clan and the coalition of seven Lion. The attempted raid on the kill by the clan failed as the pure strength of the Lions were by far more superior than the clan of twenty or more Hyena.

Three Brother Cheetah have been a regular sighting again this past month on the Tsum Tsum flood plains.

Mokoro trips from the two camps are one of the Okavango Deltas most spectacular activities, guests are always amazed on their outings to see the breeding islands of birds and the elusive and spectacular colourings of the painted reeds frogs. Red Lechwe are a common antelope found in the water logged floodplains and a spectacular sight seeing them running through the delta waters. The one morning took the guests around to the back of the hippo pool by mekoro to find an enormous crocodile laying on the banks of the hippo pool.

Guests have been sighting various reptiles this last month from water Monitor Lizards to tiny bush snakes since the rains. With the rain it has unleashed an abundance of frogs and insects and smaller fauna to the area after a long dry winter period. Beautiful Fire ball lily's and flame lily's are now commonly seen by the guests on the Kwara concession.

### Nxai Pan and Tau Pan

The builder has found tracks of a young Leopard daily at the new Nxai camp. Elephants have created a stir as they come down to the water hole in front of the camp and cool themselves off from the midday heat. The rain pan is holding some water and the Elephants stir the white calcrete

mud and toss it over them selves, the builders witness a white elephant in the making as the glossy white calcrete shimmers in the sun.

Tau Pan has had some huge male Lions walking around the camp as the construction continues. Herds of Springbuck and Oryx have congregated