



March 2010 update

After a bit of a lull towards the end of February (When we were struggling to find elephants), March again brought very good elephant viewing. Although the large herds normally seen during the summer months have started to break up as it heads into autumn, there are still many family groups moving around the area. And even though the migratory elephants have moved out of the area to greener pastures, the resident elephants were still around in good numbers.

Hestelle was seen regularly this month as was Diana. On a number of days I saw Hestelle's herd, feeding south of the Majale River during the morning, and then heading west along Elephant Valley after their midday rest. As Stella gets older, she struggles to keep up with the herd, and on one occasion, she was almost a kilometre behind the herd, however, most of the time her son Henry refuses to leave his mother to feed with the group and will stay by her side as they slowly catch up



with the other elephants. Gemma (HES02) also seems to be one that doesn't always keep up with the herd and one afternoon I was hard pressed to find the rest of the herd after spotting Gemma and three teenagers moving slowly and grazing far behind the herd.



There is still an abundance of grass to be found in the Fever-berry thickets and in March this was a good place to find elephants. On more than one occasion I found Diana's herd grazing in the thickets west of Cheetah's Koppie. The thickets have the added bonus of

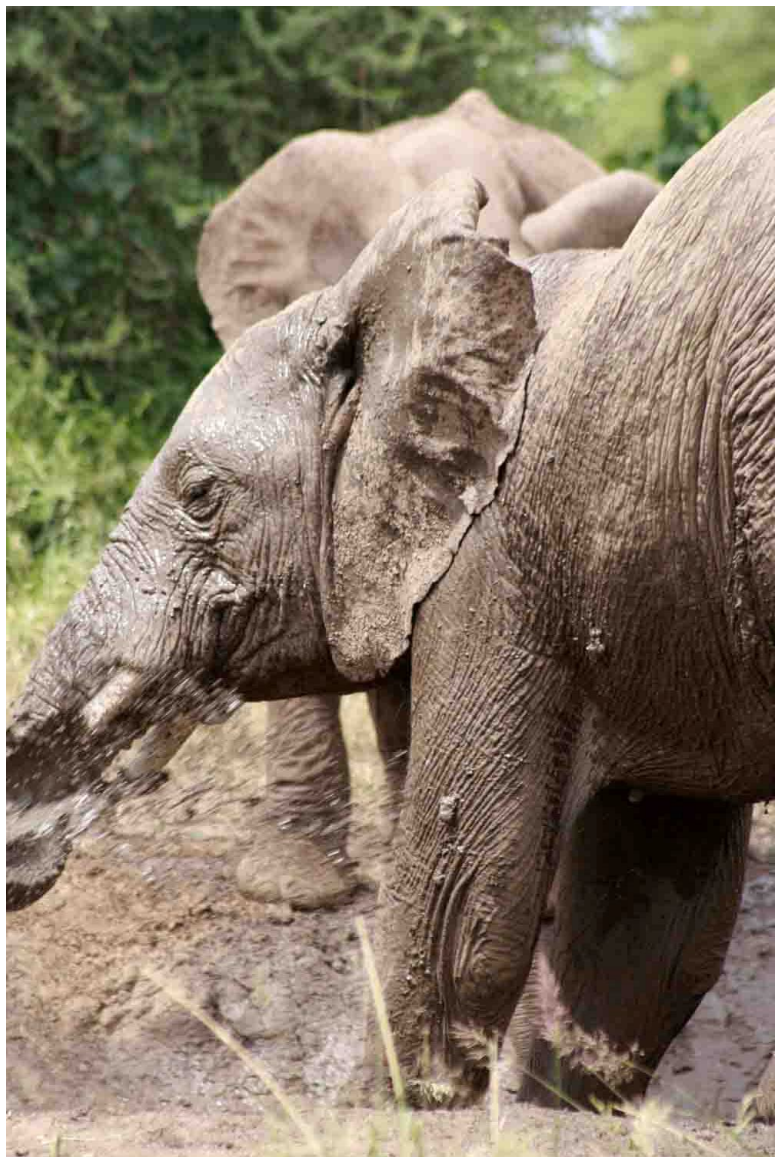


providing fantastic shade for the midday nap.

Funny face's herd was also one that took advantage of the grass available in these thickets. On one occasion, after grazing south of Cheetah's Koppie, her herd moved off west, briefly mingled with Diana's herd before carrying on west. After seeing how aggressive Diana can get with other herds, it was great to see that here there was no animosity.

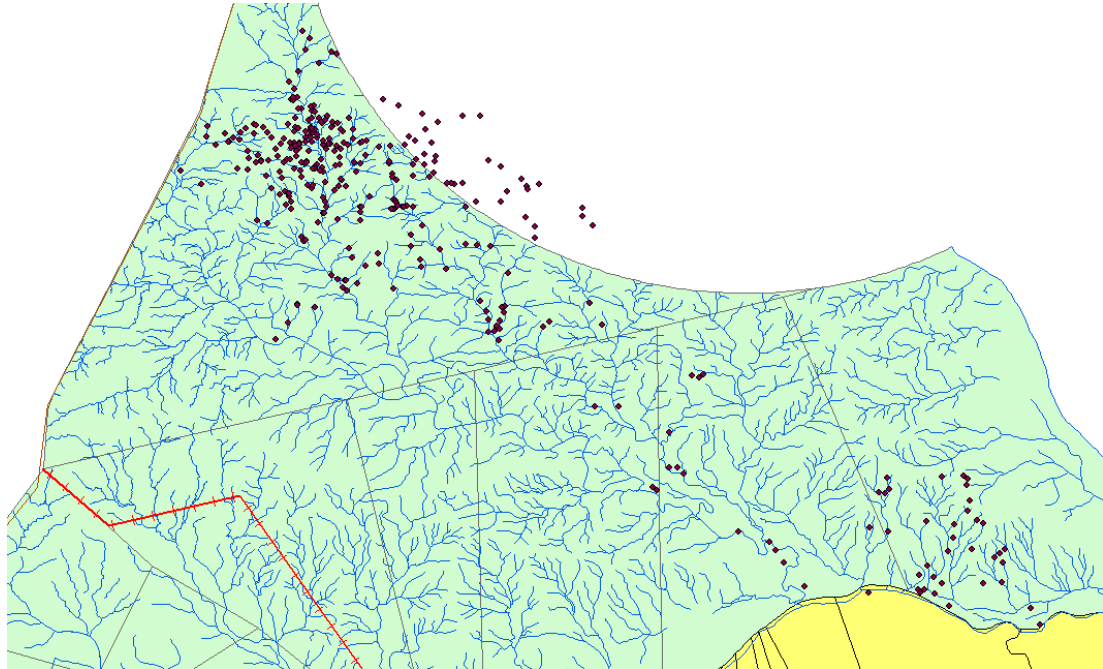
Ivory Drives

Even though there were many herds around in March, they did not always make life easy on some of the Ivory Drives. We did however have a great sighting of Hestelle's herd on one of the drives. From grazing just South of Disappointment Koppie, they moved into the Majale River, and after a good drink and plenty of splashing, started moving up the southern bank to find a bit of decent shade for the midday nap.



Collared Elephants

Christina's herd was again roaming far and wide this month and other than a brief visit down to the south of the reserve, spent most of their time in the north with a brief visit into Zimbabwe. After visiting that side of the reserve early last month, it doesn't surprise me very much. There is ample grass and water available in that region of the reserve and Christina's herd seems to be making good use of it.



Research would not be a reality if we do not have the amazing support from so many organisations and individuals who obviously share our love for nature and the vision to conserve our magnificent heritage. Thank you to each and every person who has made a contribution, in whichever way, to the project.

