

Pete's Pond June 2009

Although we've had some technical problems this month (with very "artistic" images), we've seen many wonderful things again. And winter has arrived. That means cold nights and warm, sunny days. Lovely!

The mornings specially are cold. It means it takes a bit longer for the larger animals to show up at the pond and the birds are often up on the roof, basking in the first sunlight. From left to right... Meve's Starling, Laughing Dove and Crested Barbet.



We have seen a few elephant herds again at the pond. During the day AND during the evenings. We saw a very young calf that didn't know how to drink with it's trunk yet. So it used it's mouth. We saw small, bigger, largest. And a nice herd all along the shoreline.



Another elephant sighting is a bit more serious. It's a female that doesn't seem to be well. She is on her own and moves slowly. The pond is a great place for her to be, as there is food and water close by. We do not know what is wrong with her and hope she will get well again.



Two unusual and therefore exciting sightings were the Pearl-spotted Owlet and the Verreaux's (Giant) Eagle-owl on cam together and Tilapia fish "looking like a singing choir" in the water.



One of the baboon families that visits the pond regularly has quite a few little babies at the moment. I think we saw five so far. They are such fun to watch! And every baboon in the family wants to touch them, some even trying to steal the baby away from the mother.



And "love" was in the air for the Nile Monitors. We saw many attempts from males to get close to females and one day we saw a pair mating.



And then another big story with the wild dogs. They have been at the pond often this month and it is very interesting to see how the wild dogs use the pond and it's fences (and hide) to corner and catch impala's. The impala's on the other hand, use the pond to escape from the wild dogs by jumping into the water. Both are successful... wild dogs do catch impala's at the pond and impala's do get away. But by the looks of it, the wild dogs win more often.

I'll tell you the one story. Around 3am we heard a big splash and found an impala male in the pond, with the pack of wild dogs (there were 12 of them) all along the shoreline, looking at and for the impala. The impala eventually moved to a spot under the spotlights where is stood, hiding for the wild dogs and standing very still, for hours. The wild dogs checked along the shoreline, but couldn't find the opening to the spotlights. They moved off for a while (at least out of sight), came back a few times and eventually, when it was already full daylight, they decided to leave. The impala waited for a bit, came out of the pond, stood under the ladder for a while and then, suddenly, at 6h51am, it ran off. A bit wobbly, but at least still alive.

A week or so later another impala did the same, hiding under the spotlights. But this time the wild dogs found their way there and in the end they got the impala.



Never a dull moment here!

Enjoy the pond!

Afke

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