

The Northern Tuli Predator Project

Text and pictures by Andrei Snyman

Predator Sightings

Leopards

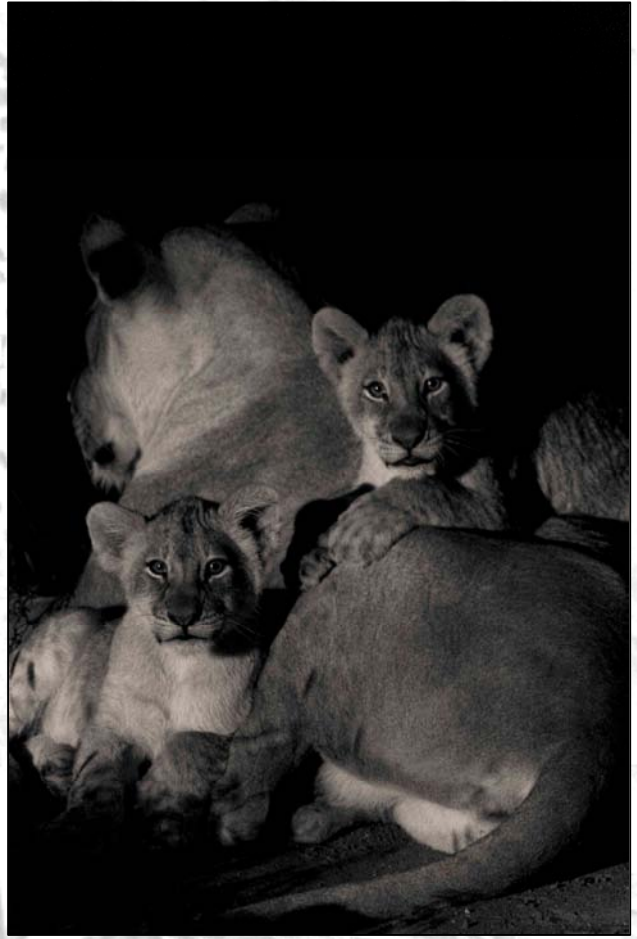
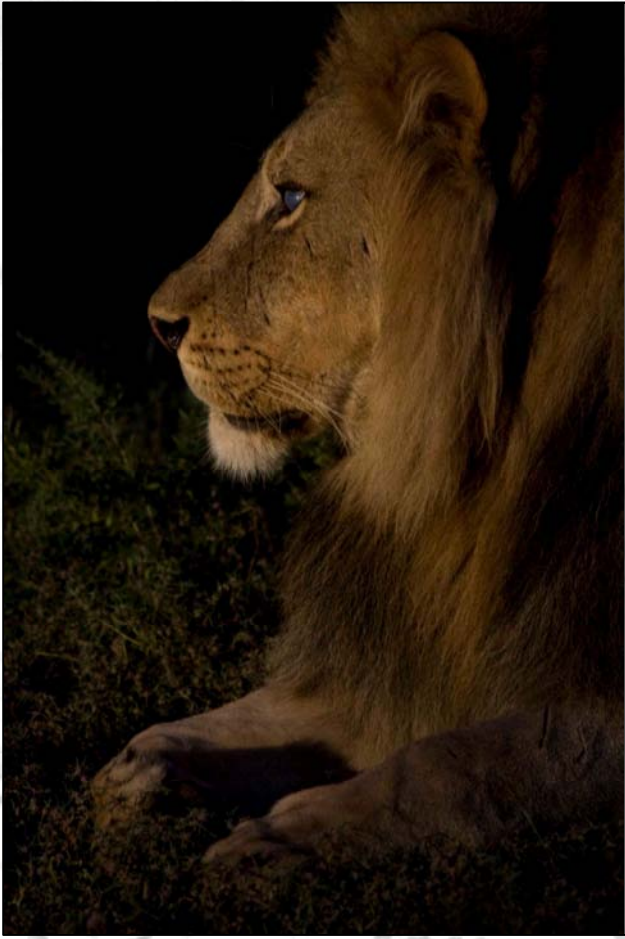
The month of May proved to be surprisingly quite in terms of leopard sightings. Although leopards were seen on a couple of occasions, sightings of these super elusive cats were, well, eluding the rangers. The young adult male that took claim over the

former territory of Skebengwa, the well known male, was seen frequently along the Majale River just south of Main Camp up to White cliffs. This male is has become extremely relaxed towards vehicles, but what surprised me most was the day I went mountain biking on my own, only to run into this male on the same elephant-path! The male was not more than 8m from me and just lay down in the grass. After we both had a good look at each other, I was even able to call the rangers conducting game drives to this sighting! Unfortunately by the time the first vehicle arrived the male walked off along a small drainage line. Not even a week after the bicycle incident did Craig Jackson walked into the same male right in front of Main Camp. The male continued to walk along the front of the rooms and then moved back south towards the Majale River.

Most other leopard sightings were during my predator drive I offer to guests where we radio tracking some of my collared male leopards.

Lions

In the lion world of Mashatu there are a few new faces to be seen! One of the adult females of the central pride gave birth earlier this year. The cubs are now more able and mobile to travel with the pride. Lions were seen almost every day during May.

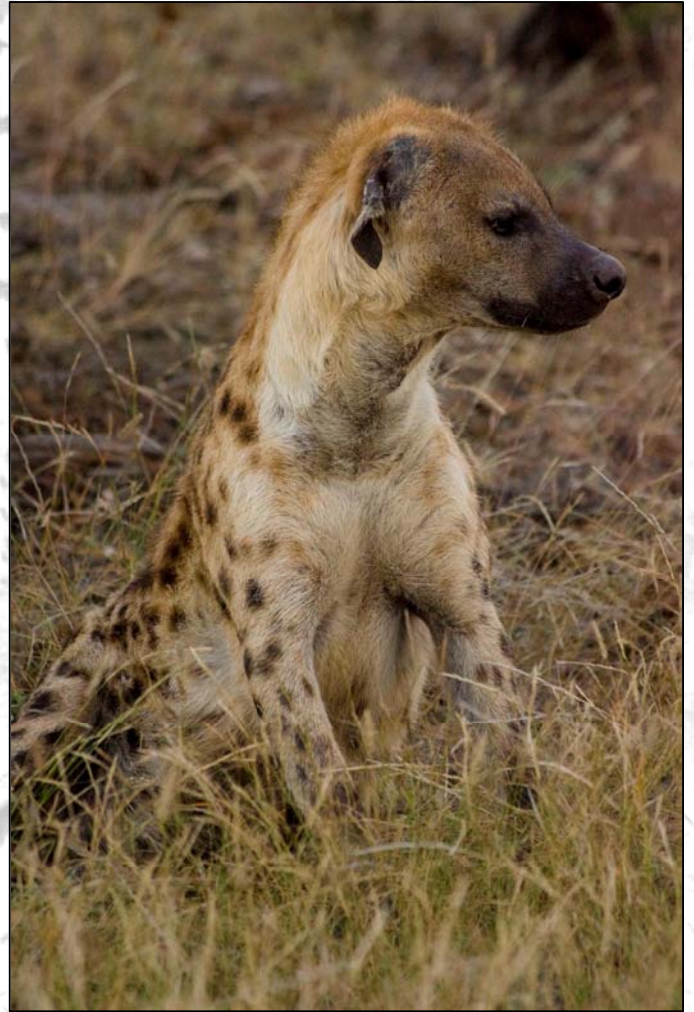


Spotted Hyena

A new den site was located just upstream of Main Camp in the Majale river. The female, which is easily recognized by her tattered ears and limping walk, was seen carrying her newborn into a den close to the bridge. The hyaena pup is still pitch black and rather shy of vehicles.

Cheetahs

The month of May proved yet again to be full of cheetah sightings. The coalition of three males was seen moving around Cheetah's Koppie (ironically) and further south to Pole Hill. A female with her young cub was seen frequently and once with an impala kill. The kill took place around 10am and soon after the kill was made vultures came from far and wide. It was easy tracking to get to the kill site, based on the circling vultures, but black-back jackals beat us to it, since they were already waiting for their scraps.



Cheetah pictures courtesy
of Craig Jackson

