



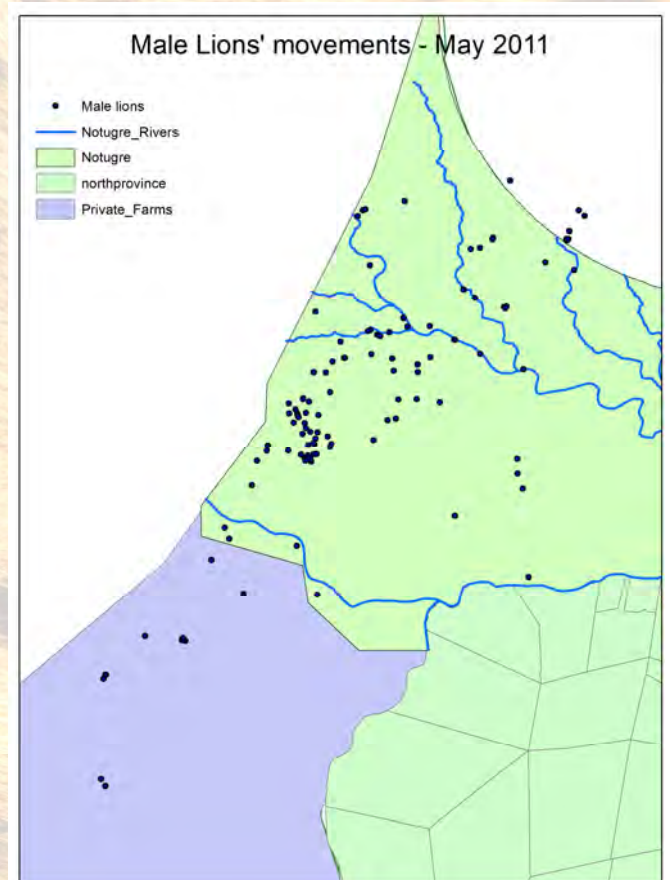
Northern Tuli Predator Project

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Lions

May proved to be another good month in Mashatu for lion sightings. The coalition of three males roaming the western side of the reserve was seen less often. One of the three males has a SAT (satellite) - GPS collar on and this allows me to follow their every day movements. These new SAT collar sends their location every few hours, regardless of where they are, to an online server. In the past we use to deploy Cell phone-based GPS collars on our research animals, but due to the lack and or patchiness distribution of cell phone reception, consistent monitoring was not possible.

The central pride was seen very frequently and during the last week of May they managed to bring down an adult eland bull. What was most surprising was the fact that while guests were having sundowner drinks, by the time they went back past the lions at the eland kill (30min later) the lions had killed an impala not even 100m away! This illustrates the opportunistic hunters lions are. Whenever an opportunity arises they'll take it.

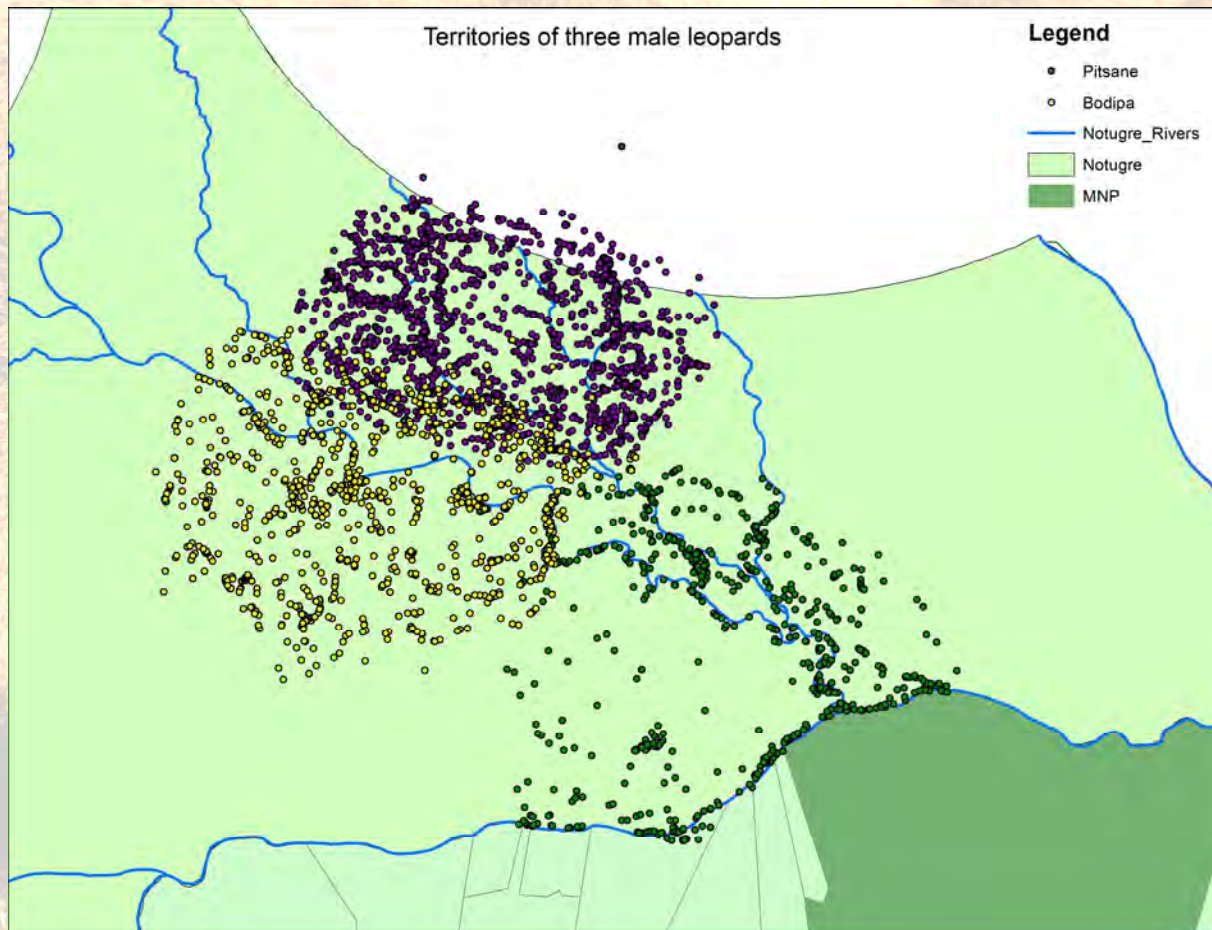




Leopard

Good leopard sightings were seen during May. A female with small cubs were seen in the central region and a large male was seen feeding on an impala kill. Other leopard sightings were also seen in and around Mashatu. The male mentioned above, named Pitsane, had a faulty radio-collar and this had to be replaced. Only problem was, nobody could find him! After weeks of trying, setting out baits and cage traps, I was finally rewarded when rangers found this male with his kill in a large Mashatu tree. Later that evening we returned to the site and successfully replaced the broken collar. A map below describes his movements, as well as two other male leopards collared as part of a research project. Each dot represents a GPS location. Note the territorial boundaries between the different males.



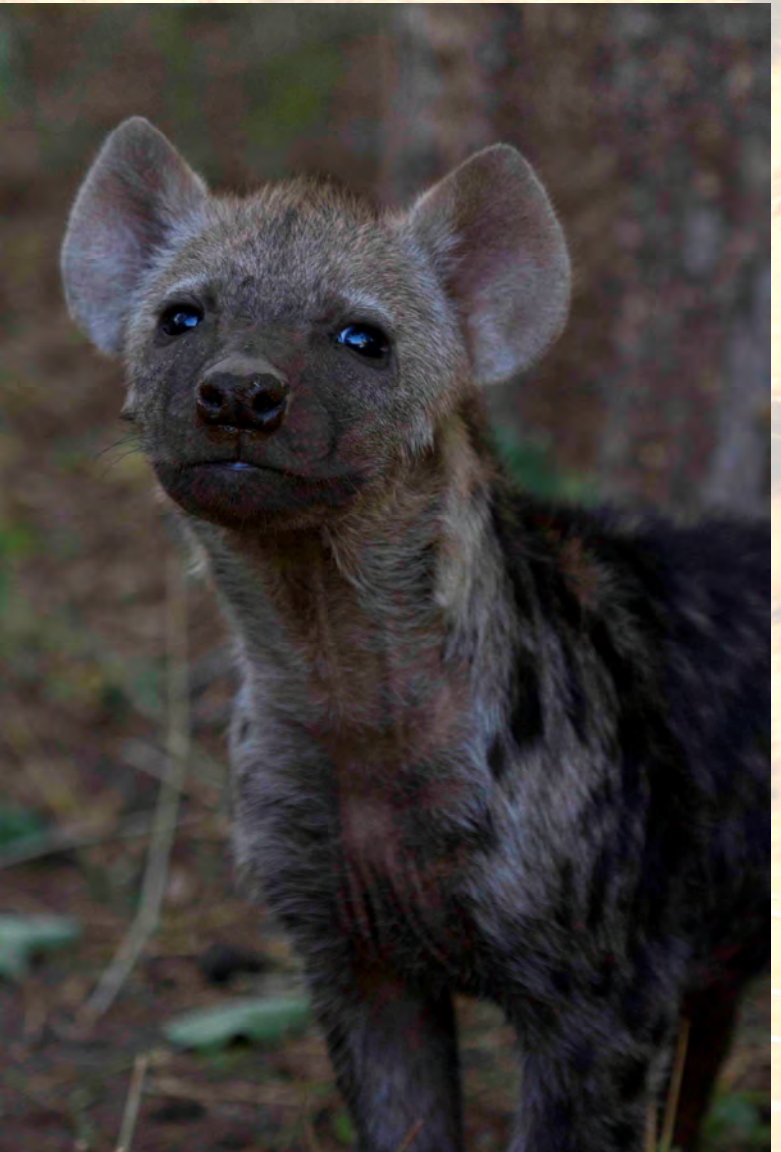


Cheetah

A few good cheetah sightings were seen, but not as abundant as the previous two months' sightings. As these carnivores utilize large home ranges it is often difficult to estimate the movement patterns and exact territory boundaries & key areas of living. These are normally determined by having animals either followed on a continual basis or placing collars on some individuals as part of an in-depth research study.

Spotted Hyaena

Three active spotted hyaena dens have been found. Two of which are near the Old M1 crossing at the Majale River. On various mornings did guests have the opportunity to see these amazing carnivores interacting with the small, still black cubs. As the adult hyaenas are very relaxed towards vehicles, and the odd cyclist riding by, they hardly take any notice of us watching them. A good opportunity for photographers indeed!



***Predator regards,
Andrei Snyman***