



### **Mashatu Game Sightings January 2007**



#### **January 2007**

We celebrated New years and then at 12:15am we had a downpour. This morning we recorded about 15mm of rainfall. We were all happy to start the year with rain!! Rain is very important for the Botswana culture and of course the wildlife of Mashatu. Whenever we have rain it means hope - more food, more births and a healthy living for our animals in the reserve.

At Cheetahs Koppie we spotted a female cheetah that walked gracefully towards the vehicle, paused for us to take pictures and then moved off. The Elephant Valley Pride was found relaxing in Elephant Valley - the three lions were asleep but the cubs were playful as usual. At Moddergat there was a female leopard seen with her cub. Not far from these cats was a herd of ten elephants moving slowly through the bush eating.

In the afternoon the Elephant Valley pride had not moved and the lions were found still to be sleeping. A herd of more than one hundred and fifty elephants was seen walking very near to the sleeping lion in Elephant Valley. This valley is one of the most beautiful spots in the reserve. The terrain is breath taking and seeing a herd of more than a hundred and fifty elephants makes one speechless with joy. While we enjoyed drinks at Cheetah Koppie we were treated to a sighting of another larger herd - this time a herd of more than two hundred elands were seen walking near the base of the koppie.

#### **Tuesday 02**

The morning was for cats. The Elephant Valley Pride was still in Elephant valley - the cats were taking it easy with the mother lioness grooming her cubs. A small herd of impala was nearby and had to stand and watch the lions from the safety of the bank, not taking any chances. The antics of a massive troop of baboons kept us entertained near Dispute Corner. At Moddergat a female leopard was seen with her cub. There was a herd of a hundred elephants seen in Elephant Valley itself.

In the afternoon there was a female cheetah seen resting at the Vlei. The leopard and the lions that were seen in the morning were also seen once again on the afternoon drive.

### **Wednesday 03**

It was a beautiful day with clear sky and choruses from birds and frogs. After breakfast we were all ready for another safari. Giraffes were seen in every corner of the vlei – a total of fifty!! At Moddergat the female leopard was seen once again with her cub. They had an impala kill; the kill was placed well in the fork of a tree so that other carnivores would not be able to reach it. A huge herd of elephants was seen wandering at Crocodile pool. In the afternoon the leopards that were seen at Moddergat in the morning were still there. They had not finished their kill but were now sleeping. At Elephant Valley there was a herd of about one hundred and fifty elephants seen as well as three aardwolf!

### **Thursday 04**

We were privileged this morning when we saw a leopard stalking and killing an impala. Most times we find a leopard with a kill already and we miss the action but not today. When ranger Fish spotted the leopard at Moddergat he turned the vehicle off and it was absolutely dead quiet. The leopard was well camouflaged and the impalas didn't see it coming. In a fraction of a second the leopard got the impala by its throat and the rest of the herd scattered. The leopard dragged the impala towards some trees before he started feeding. Near to the Limpopo Valley Airfield a herd of up to one hundred elephants was found. Another huge herd of elephants was spotted at Crocodile Pool.

In the afternoon rangers decided to take their guests on a short walk. The reserve is looking beautiful with yellow and purple flowers everywhere. Game sighting were amazing as zebras, wildebeests, warthogs, steenboks, monkeys, jackals, giraffes, baboons and bat eared fox were seen. Sundowners were enjoyed at Pole hill where we had company of seventy five elephants.

### **Friday 05**

This morning we saw two klipspringers and lots of rock hyraxes maneuvering their way along the White Cliffs. Not far from these we could hear squirrels calling out their alarm call. Driving closer we spotted a female leopard and her two cubs that were playing around with lots of energy. The gray giants of Mashatu were scattered over the grassy plains – the elephants looked like massive boulders.

On the afternoon drive Mpho went to the ruins with a group of five guests from Mashatu Tent camp. As we drove along Maifala radioed us about a lion sighting down near Merryhill with an eland kill. We decided to start with the Archaeological Drive with a trip to the lion sighting. We were directed to the sight by vultures which were flying over the kill hoping the lions would leave and so that they would have something to scavenge on. It was the Majale Island pride, they were feasting and blood was smeared all-round their mouths.

Down near the ruins, a herd of elephant was seen at Solomon's wall and the sunrays reflected perfectly on the elephants and the wall – the perfect light for beautiful photos. Having sundowners at Cecil Rhodes baobab we saw about three hundred huge grays in the valley around Mammakwa hill.

### **Saturday 06**

Impalas are often the first animals we see when departing the camps on game drives but today our first sighting of the day was a pack of four jackals. There were kudus, elands, giraffes, duikers, steenboks, wildebeests, zebras and warthogs spotted on the morning drive. To the north of Cheetahs Koppie a female cheetah was found with an impala kill. It was feasting when we arrived and paid no attention to us.

On the afternoon drive we decided to see if we could find the cheetah once again and we tracked the cheetah which had moved towards Mashatu Tent Camp. Seven leopards were seen - at Crocodile Pool there was a female leopard resting in a Mashatu tree. A mother leopard with her two cubs was spotted at Mc Nel's pools. Three leopards were spotted at the Y-junction near Mashatu Main Camp.

## **Sunday 7**

Today's temperatures soared to thirty-five degrees Celsius but this did not bother anyone. Paul and two guests headed out on a morning cycle safari while the other guests decided to go out on the game viewing vehicle. The day was packed with lots of bird sightings: ostrich, kori bustards, secretary bird, snake eagle as well as a juvenile fish eagle at Frazer Jones Weir looking for fish. The eagle managed to catch one fish but lost it as it flew up away from the weir. A lion was seen at the vlei. The big guy was resting but as we approached he lifted up his head up and put it down again, probably to inform us that he recognized our presence. At the Limpopo Valley airfield a journey of giraffes was spotted - a highlight of the day! Seeing a large group of giraffes amazed the guests and everyone in the vehicle quickly started taking pictures of the baby giraffes especially. Not far from here a herd of fifty elephants was found grazing and browsing.

During the afternoon drive a female leopard was spotted with her cub at the Nyaswe / Matobole confluence. The cub was camouflaged well and the guests battled to see it. A female hyena was seen sleeping at Frazer Jones weir with two jackal's drinking water nearby.

## **Tuesday 9**

The vlei area is looking beautiful at the moment; the grass is green and very tall. We stopped on a koppie (little hill) where we could look down onto the vlei and we could see zebras, impalas, elands, and wildebeests at the edge of the vlei. As we watched Joey asked, "What is moving that grass over there?" The moving grass was headed to where the impalas were and in no time the impalas scattered all over. It was the Elephant Valley Pride of lions, but by the time they reached the edge of the vlei the impalas, elands, wildebeests and zebras were long gone.

## **Wednesday 10**

It was a beautiful morning with bright rays of the sun seen in the east. At Uitspan impalas, zebras and a male lion were found. The impalas had seen the lion and were very cautious. Every move they made they would keep checking to see if the lion had stirred. Surprisingly the zebras did not see the lion and the big male decided to stalk the zebras. His first moves were good but then the impalas got curious as they couldn't see the lion and started barking out warning calls and the zebras ran away. There were two hyenas seen walking at the White Cliffs - a male and a female hyena.

Two guests decided to go to the ruins with Mpho for the afternoon. Driving to the archaeological site there was a lot of game seen from the tall giraffes to the little chameleon. The highlight of the drive was seeing the chameleon crossing the road. It was grey in color while crossing the road and then turned green when it reached the green grass on the other side! At the Mapungubwe turn off we spotted an African rock python, about two and half meters long. While enjoying sundowner we saw a dazzling view of hyena chasing a herd of impalas. Who said Hyenas don't hunt? The impalas were petrified and ran away at high speed. The hyena chased them for a while but then gave up. We were also treated to an amazing view of about a hundred elephants in the valley below.

## **Thursday 11**

Our morning started out quietly...it was as if all the animals were gathered in some secret location which we could not find. The guinea fowls, francolins and the monkeys had not been invited and they were found scratching and searching for tit-bits in the dust. After a while our sightings improved as a small herd of giraffe came into view at Baboon's Bedroom. They were accompanied by impalas and a few kudus, and nearby a troop of baboons played in a massive Mashatu Tree. Sightings of general game increased as the morning progressed – herds of eland, zebra and wildebeest were all found in the vicinity. We finally spotted a male leopard resting at Moddergat on our way back to camp.

## **Friday 12**

The morning temperatures were up to thirty-three degrees Celsius but thankfully there was a fresh breeze blowing. It was a morning the elephants - we had a wonderful time with a herd of about two hundred

elephants found at Elephants Valley. We drove to the peak of Elephant's Valley and from there could witness the magical wanders of Mashatu. There was a juvenile elephant that made a long low rumble as if he were saying "Hey there! I see you!" Eric had turned off his engine and we could hear the call of the elephant well. We could hear the cracking of branches as the herd broke the tree branches for their young ones to feed on. While watching these elephants we also had sightings of jackals, giraffes, kudus, and zebras. Another herd of twenty elephants was spotted at Crocodile Pool and fifteen more elephants were seen at Uitsapn.

On the afternoon drive an active hyena was found at the water tanks. We spotted a leopard whose intention was to stalk some impalas but before he could move the monkeys and the guinea fowl had seen him and the impalas raced off. The poor leopard was very disappointed and sat under the mopane tree looking at the guinea fowl in the tree that went on with their noisy alarm calls. General game sighting were brilliant: zebras, kudus, baboons, duiker, elands, jackals, steenboks, warthogs, wildcat and wildebeests were seen.

### **Saturday 13**

The morning was brilliant as Paul our walking concessionaire took guests on a walking trail. Just outside Mashatu Main Camp there were lots of impalas and three bushbucks seen. It was a very interesting and informative walk as we saw lots of creatures that we do not get to see when on a vehicle such as jumping spiders and grasshoppers. Toward the White Cliffs we heard some faint calls of hyenas. We found about five hyenas on a fresh impala kill. It looked as if the hyenas had made the kill themselves but just as Paul was about to move on a leopard came from the other direction and approached the hyenas. The hyenas must have stolen the leopards kill. This happened while we watched from about a hundred meters away.

Those who decided to go on the afternoon game drive spotted an active leopard at Crocodile Pool .Not far from it Crocodile Pool a huge lion was seen. The lion was walking towards a herd of fifty elephants that were not too happy about his presence. The elephant calves were positioned in the middle of the herd to protect them from the lion. The baboons were also going crazy calling out to warn the other game in the area.



### **Sunday 14**

It was a good start to the week with a sighting of a leopard! We caught sight of a female leopard while she was resting at Crocodile pool. The leopard was relaxed and so we were lucky enough to be able to take brilliant pictures. Huge grays were also wandering along in the Crocodile Pool area. The elephants were actually moving along to where the leopard was but fortunately did not browse on the tree she was resting in! At the White Cliffs there were two hyenas that were spotted drinking water from the Majale River. Once they saw us they moved off and disappeared.

On the afternoon drive we went to see if the female leopard that was seen in the morning amongst elephants was still there. She was still in the same spot and positioned with her legs hanging down over the branch. There was still a herd of elephants in the area but it was smaller than the one we saw in the morning. A huge herd of seventy-five elephants was seen slurping down water at Dispute corner.

### **Monday 15**

A total of six leopards were seen today whilst out on game drives. The first four leopards were seen at the White Cliffs where they were feasting on an impala. At Three Mashatu a male leopard was spotted sleeping in the fork of a tree. A female leopard was banqueting on a fresh impala meal at Khanda waterhole. There was a herd of impala still milling about looking confused and anxious. At Frazer Jones weir a pack of two hyenas were seen slumbering at the edge of the weir. The Elephant Valley Pride had moved from where they were yesterday to Fig Tree Crossing. Other game sightings included: bat eared fox, jackals, banded mongoose, small spotted genet, African wildcat, Civet cat, wildebeests, zebras, kudus, steenboks, bushbucks, warthogs, monkeys, giraffes, elands, duikers and baboons

### **Tuesday 16**

The morning was spent at Khanda Corner where we found the Elephant Valley Pride feasting on an eland and a pack of hyenas feasting on the carcass of a wildebeest only about eight hundred meters apart from each other! At first we saw the lions and as we watched in silence there came a sound of hyenas to the east. Bashi drove a hundred meters and saw the hyenas. We could stand in one spot and see both meat eaters feasting. There was a herd of over one hundred and fifty elephants at Crocodile Pool while another herd of twenty elephants was spotted roaming in Elephant Valley.

During the afternoon drive a female cheetah was spotted at Elephant Valley. The cheetah got a fright when we approached so we decided to switch off the engine. She relaxed and walked gracefully past us. Compared to leopard cheetahs have slender bodies designed for speed. Unlike other cats cheetahs have non-retractable claws, like dogs. At Crocodile Pool there was male leopard with her cub seen, quite relaxed, in a Shepard tree.

### **Wednesday 17**

The day was packed as we saw lots of animals ranging from the little blue waxbill to the large elephants. The blue waxbills and weavers were assisting the rangers in waking their guests up in the morning. The morning songs were heavenly and all guests were up and ready for the day. As we enjoyed breakfast we watched two-bushbuck drinking from the water hole - a good start indeed! At the White Cliffs we just managed to spot a baby leopard in the tress when we saw its tail swing below the branch – it was very well camouflaged. Its mother had probably left it there while she went out hunting. There were two active female hyenas seen at Disappointment Koppie. Tree leopards were seen taking it easy at the Nyaswe borehole where we took stunning pictures. Up to now we have been spoilt with the Elephant Valley lion sightings and today was no different – we found the mother lying down while the cubs were playing on top of her. A herd of fifty elephants was found feasting on the greens in Elephant Valley. We could count the huge grays from where we were stopped at the top of the valley.

### **Thursday 18**

This morning was action packed as we watched a battle between baboons and cheetahs at Beacon Hill. The baboons were chasing the cheetahs when all of a sudden the cheetahs stopped, stood their ground and then started going for the baboons. At this point there was silence as the baboons were not to sure as to what to do. One male baboon “barked” loudly and the cheetahs were caught off guard. The baboons once again raced towards the cheetahs but as cheetahs are such speedy animals they easily avoided the primates.

The Elephant Valley Pride of lions was found resting at Crocodile pool. Not far from this pride we found a female leopard and her cub. The cub was injured, probably from the baboons, and was battling to walk properly. The mother leopard was watching its cub and she was obviously troubled. Another leopard was spotted stalking impalas at Matobole. We followed the leopard for a way but from out of nowhere came the alarm call of guinea fowls that must have spotted the leopard – the calls alerted the impalas to the

leopard's presence and they ran away. The poor cat gave up. A male and a female hyena were seen at Frazer Jones weir and a herd of thirty elephants was found wandering along near the Main Camp water tanks.

### **Friday 19**

At Well Shaped Mashatu four ground hornbills were found. The Ground hornbills are a rare species to be seen in the reserve and they are also a protected bird of Botswana. There were three cheetahs seen at Cheetahs Koppie. They were the same cheetahs seen yesterday which had moved from Beacon Hill during night and they were now lolling and taking it easy. Four hyenas were seen on the move at Eric donga.

At Crocodile Pool a female leopard (the mother of the cub that had been injured yesterday) was seen on her own and at the bottom of the tree was a drag mark and bloodstain. From what the rangers could piece together it looked as if the hyenas had killed the injured leopard cub.

The Elephant Valley Pride was found still resting at Crocodile Pool .The mother was snoozing while the tiny cubs were walking around.

### **Saturday 20**

The morning was very cool and so the guests decided to go on a cycle safari. Joe was in the lead as they headed out from Mashatu Main Camp. A stunning pair of brown eagles was seen at the Y junction to start off the adventure. Cycling along the Majale River in the soft sand was great fun and game sightings were amazing. We saw elands, male kudus, impalas, jackals, zebras, wildebeests, bushbuck and a big track of a python. We tried to follow it but we couldn't find the snake. The highlight of the cycle was when we came across a herd of thirty elephants on the bikes. We then had tea at Braai koppie and from this position Joe pointed down the koppie to the east where he had spotted a lion. As we looked there was a handsome lion relaxing in the open grassland.

The afternoon was for the elephants and where we found them browsing in vleis. We counted over one hundred - mothers and babies were feasting while young boys were more inquisitive and came quite close to the vehicle. Another herd of fifty elephants was seen spread out near the Majale Island where they were grazing. Four cheetahs were also spotted at Bryce's store this afternoon.

### **Sunday 21**

We had an exciting start to the morning drive as we headed towards Pole hill. A scrub hare darted out in front of the vehicle and from nowhere jumped three cheetahs after the hare. The cheetahs chased the hare and managed to catch it quite easily. Once cheetah quickly grabbed the kill and ran away. We watched the cheetah with its small feast while the other two cheetah also looked on. A female leopard was found sleeping at Quelea colony. A herd of about fifty elephants were spotted wandering near the Majale cocktail spot and another herd of elephants was found roaming at Elephant Valley.

The Elephant Valley lions were found hunting at Wildebeest koppie on the afternoon game drive. They first tried to stalk and herd of wildebeests but failed. As they approached a herd of elands the impala which had already seen the lions started alarm calling and alerted the elands to the impending danger. The pride finally gave up and walked away. At Pitsane Koppie four cheetahs were seen walking about and as they walked they stretched and yawned. At Lucenda Crossing a female leopard was walking with intent along the Majale River, probably on a territorial patrol. A herd of the thirty elephants was found grazing at Crocodile Pool.

### **Monday 22**

By 5:15am all our guests were up and about having coffee on the terrace getting ready for the day ahead. We had a great morning watching a battle between a hyena and a leopard! The leopard had made a kill and placed it securely (or so it thought) in a treetop. As the leopard was feasting on the kill a hyena

arrived and sat drooling at the base of the tree, hoping to get a share. The hyena was in luck, a short while later the impala kill accidentally fell out the tree and the hyena was quick to grab it. The leopard, however, did not give up and jumped down out of the tree and tried to grab the meat back but the hyenas grip was too strong. Later in the morning the Elephant Valley Pride was found resting at Crocodile pool and approximately one hundred and fifty elephants were seen at Braai Koppie.

In the afternoon there were three different sightings of leopard in one drive. Two female leopards were spotted taking it easy at Crocodile Pool and Majale Island and an active male leopard was also seen at Frazer Jones weir. While enjoying dinner at Main Camp the howling of hyenas was heard just near the waterhole. We watched the waterhole for a while and at last a huge male hyena came out of the darkness and drank some water.

### **Tuesday 23**

The reserve is beautiful and green at the moment with lots of babies running around. Just outside Main camp this morning we saw an impala that had given birth less than ten minutes before we arrived. At Crocodile Pool a huge lion was seen sleeping. The next sighting was of an elegance of four cheetahs resting at Disappointment Koppie. A count of two hundred and five elephant was seen during this drive. A big herd of one hundred and eighty elephants at Crocodile pool, five elephants seen walking at Braai Koppie while twenty elephants were found browsing at Three Mashatu.

In the afternoon the Elephant Valley Pride was spotted at Mokgacha wa mokabi. Towards Disappointment Koppie we saw vultures flying overhead and we thought there could possibly be a kill in the area. As we approached we also saw two tawny eagles and finally spotted cheetahs that had made an impala kill. Jackals were waiting patiently nearby hoping to scavenge as the cheetahs were feasting. Driving back to camp a male leopard was spotted at White Cliff. While having drinks at the bar two elephants came and drank water from Main camp waterhole.

### **Wednesday 24**

This week we were very blessed with cheetah sightings almost everyday. Today four cheetahs were spotted at Braai Koppie - a mother and her three subadults playing and chasing each other. At the Majale Cocktail spot a leopard was seen. The leopard had seen us from the top of the tree it was in as we drove past. The leopard was, however, very nervous and jumped down from the tree and ran off. A herd of elephant was found roving at Long Grass, we were battling to see the calves as it is very green and the grass is very tall in this area. Another herd of elephants was spotted at Nels windmill where they were enjoying the fresh vegetation.

The afternoon drive was full of action - there were lions, cheetahs, leopard and a journey of thirty giraffes seen. The Elephant Valley Pride was found resting in open grassland and not far away a leopard was spotted resting. Four cheetahs were found walking in the dry riverbed of the Majale River. Giraffes were walking gracefully near these cheetahs – a beautiful setting for photographs. A herd of fifty elephants was seen walking near White Cliffs with their calves.

### **Thursday 25**

The day was packed with life and we had great sightings of cats. There was a male lion seen at Lucenda Crossing – he was stalking a herd of impalas but the guinea fowl came from nowhere and started alarm calling and the impalas scattered. The Elephant Valley Pride was resting at Dispute Corner. At Braai Koppie 4 cheetahs, a mother and her three sub adults, were found relaxing in the shade of an acacia tree. From the east came a dust cloud caused by a herd of fifty five elephants. As they walked gracefully past the cheetahs we were able to take stunning pictures. There was a male and a female hyena seen at the White Cliff.

### **Friday 26**

It was a cloudy morning which made it rather humid. Our guests decided sleep in and spent most of the morning in the Discovery Center reading and relaxing around camp.

In the afternoon there were all looking forward to the drive and just outside main camp two hyenas were seen heading north. We followed them for a while and left them at the Main camp / Tented camp crossing. Another pack of hyena was seen at the White Cliff. An elegance of four cheetahs was spotted at Wildebeest Koppie feasting on an impala carcass. Elephants were also seen on the drive - a herd of fifteen elephants at Crocodile pool. The highlight of the evening was seeing a civet cat that it rare to see on drives.

### **Saturday 27**

It was a morning for interesting and varied sightings: we saw three ground hornbills making a nest at Well-shaped Mashatu. Unlike other hornbill the ground hornbills do not seal the nest cavity for the females when hatching the eggs. The ground hornbills are extremely slow breeders. An African rock Python was also seen at Moddergat. The python was about three meters long. It was coiled around and we couldn't tell if there was an animal or not. On this drive three leopard sightings were observed. At Old Rock camp the Elephant Valley Pride was taking it easy while a male lion was seen at Crocodile Pool. A herd of twenty elephants was spotted wandering at Cheetahs Koppie.

In the afternoon there were cheetahs seen at the Khanda waterhole. It was a mother and her three juvenile cubs. The mother was lying while the cubs were playing with each other. A lion was seen at Elephant Valley resting a hundred meters away from the main road. A female leopard was spotted drinking water at Dispute Corner.

### **Sunday 28**

An elegance of four cheetahs was spotted at Wildebeest Koppie this morning. These cats are designed for speed with their long tails and slender builds – one can never tire from seeing them and the past week has been wonderful with sightings of cheetah every day. At Dispute Corner a female leopard was taking it easy while a herd of elands walked by. We had thought that maybe she would scare them but she, and the elands, stayed calm. Elephant herds have been frequenting the central area of the reserve and today was no different - a herd was seen at the Wallow while another herd of twenty was found at Lucenda Crossing.

On the afternoon drive we found the Elephant Valley Pride and they had killed an eland. The cubs were feasting and they were smeared with blood all over their bodies. This would mean hours of grooming ahead from their mother and siblings. The cheetahs that were seen in the morning had moved to the east of Khanda waterhole. At Dispute Corner the leopard, also seen this morning, had not moved an inch. Five elephants were seen drinking and mud bathing at the Crocodile Pool.

### **Monday 29**

It was a beautiful morning with a fresh breeze blowing. We had thought that maybe it would rain but no joy. There were four cheetahs seen at Dispute corner. This elegance was different from the one seen the previous day. It was a mother and three cubs and the cubs were younger than the ones seen during the previous week. The cheetahs were feasting on an impala ram. The Elephant Valley Pride was still hanging around the eland kill and this time the jackals were nearby hoping to get a few scraps. A female leopard with spotted with an impala kill at Dispute Corner.

This afternoon the guests requested that we focus on the big trees seen on Mashatu. From camp we drove to the western region of the reserve where we saw the large Mashatu (nyala berries) tree and baobab trees. As we drove back towards Main Camp we spotted a female leopard stalking impalas near the water tanks.

### **Tuesday 30**

Even though many of us live in the bush we never tire of seeing the wonderful things that each day brings - everyday is a new day and at the moment each day is also bringing new life. Seeing new born babies with their mothers always brightens up the day – the wildebeests with their grey young ones, zebras with the stripy babies and many impala calves pronging here and there.

There were two leopard sightings this morning - the first leopard was seen at Speed Corner and the second leopard was spotted at Nels Windmill. At first we were tracking lion but we were disturbed by a squirrel calling. We followed the calls and found a male leopard resting in a Mashatu tree. Cheetahs were also seen at Hammerkop Crossing. At Crocodile Pool the Elephant Valley Pride was seen resting. A herd of seventy-five elephants was found near the airfield browsing on the fresh greens.

The highlight of the afternoon was seeing the Majale Island lioness with four tiny cubs at Nels Windmill. The last time we saw the lioness was in October 2006. The cubs were very tiny and they hid by the trees. They were nervous as it is their first time seeing the game vehicle. The Elephant Valley Pride was also seen this afternoon at Crocodile pool. A female leopard was seen resting at Dispute corner and not far from here was a herd of ten elephant drinking water and mud bathing. Four cheetahs were seen at Old Rock camp and two female hyenas were also seen near the cheetahs.

### **Wednesday 31**

It was yet another productive day in terms of cat sightings at Mashatu. A female lioness with two of her female sub adults, from the Elephant Valley Pride, was spotted stalking zebras and wildebeest near Old rock camp. The Majale Island lioness with her four cubs was also seen walking at the Majale Island. At Disappointment Koppie four cheetah and four hyenas were seen. The cheetahs moved away into the mopane trees as hyenas are generally stronger and more aggressive. There was a beautiful female leopard spotted resting at Dispute corner.

The cheetahs were seen once again near Old Rock Camp stalking and chasing impala. We unfortunately did not see them make a kill though while we were watching them. At Crocodile Pool the Elephant Valley Pride was resting and decided to have sundowners here watching the lions from a safe distance. While enjoying drinks a female hyena walked straight towards the pride. The lions were fast to react but the hyena made good her escape.

