



Mashatu Game Sightings 1 March – 5 April 2009



Sunday, March 1, 2009

A magnificent summer's day with great viewing during both the morning and the afternoon drives. At the Old Water Tank, a single male leopard was seen hunting in the afternoon. Watching this male slowly move among the long grass, every muscle tensing as it moved towards of a herd of impala, had us all holding our breath. The leopard pounced, but too early - and after a loud bark by an impala, the whole herd set off at a run. The leopard retreated to the long grass. At Kanda Corner, 160 elephants spent their Sunday afternoon grazing and walking about. Guests saw their share of baboons, monkeys, warthogs and wildebeests too.

Monday, March 2, 2009

On a hot, humid and overcast day, guests were treated to the sight of a large group of elephants (numbering over 160) at Croc Pool in the Majale River, while early in the morning a lone bull was seen walking purposefully below Cheetah's Koppie. A large group of zebras was grazing along with several giraffes in Elephant Valley. A black-backed jackal was seen near Main Camp. Wildebeest, eland, impala and kudu were abundant.

After sunset, giraffes, zebra and elephants remained active, and a hyena was seen hunting.

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

On an early morning drive, four lions were observed near Bryce's Store. The two lionesses were resting alongside the Pitsane River with two cubs. The day was hot, reaching a temperature of 31, but that didn't stop the wildebeests from their constant running and

romping among herds of impala. Kudu, eland, ostrich, and quite a large family of baboons were at Cheetah's Koppie. A Secretary Bird strutted about too.

In late afternoon, a male leopard was spotted at Majale Crossing. Also at Majale Crossing was a grazing herd of 20 elephant cows and calves.

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

A female lion was resting at Majale Island in the morning, and a herd of 20 elephants was at Beacon Hill. A larger herd of about 50 elephants was enjoying the morning grazing at Braai Koppie. Zebra, wildebeest, impala and giraffe were plentiful, and a lone steenbok was watching his territory.

In the afternoon, guests were witness to the excitement of tracking a lion. The Ranger, Dan, spotted the lion's tracks. Guests in the vehicle watched as he expertly and deliberately followed the tracks. One guest commented on the excitement and the tension that was palpable in the concentrated silence. Everyone knew that any minute, the cat might appear behind the next bush. Finally, a female lion was seen moving quickly up a dry riverbed near Nel's Windmill. The vehicle moved along with the lioness, and very soon the smell of a recent kill was evident. Up ahead, vultures stood by in the trees. The lioness got to the kill and began feeding voraciously on the expired eland. A short distance away, a male lion rested alongside a tree - he seemed very proud to have guests taking photographs of him. Two giraffes joined the lion just as the sun was setting, giving a beautiful pink backdrop to end the day. On the drive back to Main Camp, a very large herd of wildebeest treated the guests to quite a sight as they ran at high speed across the road in front of the vehicle.



Thursday, March 5, 2009

The wild dogs were seen north of Tent Camp up by the water tanks. They were resting and well hidden in the long grass, but got up to walk around a bit, so their beautifully painted coats were easily observed. A male leopard was seen feeding off an impala at Nyaswe/Olifants Confluence, while another male leopard was resting at Nel's Windmill. Also at Nel's Windmill, a lioness fed on an eland. In the same area a single bull elephant grazed. Matriarch elephant, Hestelle's herd, was observed playing in the mud at Lucenda tree crossing on the Majale River. The young bulls were very active and playful as they chased each other through the trees, while the younger calves and the females rolled in the mud.

Hestelle and her second-in-command, Gemma, made their way to the other side of the river. They kept watch over the herd from the relative tranquillity of the opposite. The wild dogs remained at the Tent Camp Water tanks, and were observed resting there at the end of the day.

Friday, March 6, 2009

The morning started out cool as summer begins to wane. The elephants made a later appearance than usual, but eventually turned up in large numbers at Dispute Corner. One herd, numbering more than 30, was first observed in the river, but then moved up into the trees. There were at least three young calves under one year old, and one appeared to have been born within the last two months. The little one got a fright when it realized it was too far from "mama", and trumpeted its concern. Immediately the herd came to its aid and comfort, and the baby calmed. Meanwhile the young bulls (there appeared to be about six teenagers) were busy showing off to one another, as well as to the guests who had the pleasure of watching their display. The herd was likely one of the Limpopo migratory herds. Not far from the Limpopo herd, Hestelle's herd was enjoying a leisurely graze, while taking the time to rest. Even the young bulls were playing much less rambunctiously than the day before on the banks of the Majale. At McKenzie Koppie a herd of 20 spent the morning grazing.

Three adult hyenas were in the Tent Camp area in the morning. The group, consisting of one male and two females, was feeding on an impala.

Among one of the herds of zebra was a very young baby that looked like it had been born just within a day or so as it still wobbled a bit on its legs. Just outside of Main Camp, a group of wart hogs gathered to play and eat. In the group were a number of very young babies.

The 16 wild dogs remained in the Tent Camp area, where they hunted and fed on an impala. In the evening they had moved a short distance from the kill location, and were at Olifant's - south of Tent Camp - where they were quite active. They were observed playing, and appeared to have something of interest cornered in a burrow. The dogs were very concentrated on it, and went in and out of the burrow continuously, but whatever was in there did not come out before the dogs left the immediate area.

Saturday, March 7, 2009

Three adult hyenas - this time two males and one female - hunted in the morning at Hamerkop Crossing. The elephants were having a grand time at Dispute Corner again. A large herd of approximately 100 grazed as well as played in the river and enjoyed mud baths. At Kanda Waterhole, here was a smaller herd (though still large at around 75). Among them were six bulls. In addition to walking around and drinking at the waterhole, some of the elephants were mating.

Over and above the herds of zebra and impala, the giraffe, kudu and eland were easily spotted, and a black-backed jackal made its way through the bush.

During the evening drive, the pack of wild dogs was once again encountered just north of Agate's Koppie, resting in the late afternoon sun. A small herd of elephants was browsing on the multitude of Mopane trees along the hill side near Fraser Jones' weir.



Sunday, March 8, 2009

The weather was sunny and the afternoon drive took us to Pete's Pond. On the way up there we spotted several hamerkops near the river, some elephants and giraffes. While seated in the hide, a beautiful woodland kingfisher paid his respects, as well as a warthog with her two youngsters. A blacksmith plover and a red hornbill were to be seen as well. As we approached the Main Camp towards the end of our evening drive we came across the pack of wild dogs just outside of the Main Camp. The wild dogs have killed an impala nearby and the hyenas were moving in for a closer look, but the wild dogs would have nothing of the sort and after a short while the hyenas resorted to calling and vocalising while the dogs finished off what was left of their kill and moved off a little from the camp.

Monday, March 9, 2009

Cloudy weather, but we are excited! Would the pack of wild dogs still be here? We indeed found them not far from the main camp. 16 Wild dogs, multi coloured, hunting and feeding. So beautiful to see! Several giraffes came on our way, as well a few zebra's. At Fig Tree Crossing we saw a herd of elephants, drinking, playing, relaxing. All of a sudden the baby elephant fell and in a split second instinctively all elephants rounded up around the little baby elephant, all pointing outwards and only moved forwards again when the baby elephant was on the feet again. A female male leopard was spotted at the Fig Tree Crossing as well and at Majale Bridge a male and a female hyena on the hunt were spotted. The two male lions were also spotted below Pitsane Koppie and the arrival of the game viewers only got a slight stir out of one of the males.

During the afternoon we saw two kori bustards, a white fronted bee-eater, long tailed starling, saddle billed and black storks, warthogs, ostriches and a giraffe resting under a big shepherds tree.

At the end of the day, we drove up south and met a migratory herd of over 100 elephants and some 4 bat-eared foxes. Jeanetta, the elephant expert, was observing the herd and was approached by many elephants including a young bull of 10 to 15 years, who was very curious about the vehicle and its occupants. He got so close to the vehicle and gave the

occupants the thrill of a lifetime! His behaviour was not threatening, his behaviour exhibiting curiosity.

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

A rainy day. Near the Majale River at Dispute Corner, we saw a herd of 16 elephants. Later on a herd of 10 elephants huddled under the trees at Braai Koppie and at Fig Tree Crossing a herd of 28 elephants were playing and drinking. At Eagles Nest a male leopard was seen on the move. Later on in the morning a huge herd of over 150 elephants came down to the Majale River where they were drinking and some of the youngsters were swimming in the river. By now it was pouring down with rain but this did not seem to deter the elephants from having a ball in the river. Along the Majale River, a young calve of less than a year old fell and immediately the herd came to help and comfort the baby. All the elephants surrounded the little one till it was on its feet again. What an amazing sight! Two male hyenas were spotted at Old Rock camp and M1 Crossing resting. Pouring rain, 23 degrees, still a lot to be seen: the bachelor herd and the mating herd of impalas and other mammals like baboons, eland, impala, jackal, vervet monkeys, zebra, wildebeest. Most predators were hiding, but not the pack of 16 wild dogs resting at Main camp. A kori bustard, the heaviest flying bird showed himself and also a steenbokkie and 6 giraffes were seen.

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Cloudy weather, 21 degrees, and the pack 16 wild dogs were seen once more north of Main Camp. Hunting, and the kill was just a spring hare although a herd of impalas was nearby. It was a day for birds: white fronted bee-eater, hamerkop, African darter, Heuglin's robin, starling, blacksmith plover, crowned plover, Buchell's coucal. And not to forget the Egyptian goose, some guinea fowls and a kori bustard. Eagles Nest was the place to spot a female hyena resting. At Agate's Koppie some guests saw a herd of 7 elephants and witnessed a bull mating with one of the young females in the herd. After the mating, the whole herd celebrated by trumpeting and gathering around the cow. What an amazing noise! Some zebra's and 4 elands remained active in the pouring rain. We were treated to the sight of a large group of elephants numbering over 150 near Agate's Koppie.

In the afternoon the guests observed 3 male cheetahs hunting near the old airstrip and juvenile leopard was spotted feeding near Tented Camp. Furthermore during the afternoon baboons, elands, giraffes, jackals, impalas, kudus, wildebeests, zebras, warthogs, and several vervet monkeys were spotted in the drive.

Thursday, March 12, 2009

The weather is dry, although cloudy and we are off for an ivory tour with Jeanetta. Before seeing any elephants, we ran into a male kudu north of Main Camp. At Bush Braai Spot, a group of 21 elephants were browsing and grazing, Floppy a huge bull included. At M1 crossing a male and female hyena was seen and resting peacefully. The wild dogs were seen at Khanda Camp, all on the move now.

Theresa's group was spotted and another herd of 8 elephants with 2 baby elephants. Later on in the drive we came across the Tuskless herd again this time close to the big Baobab just north of Main Camp. A female leopard was seen walking near the TK Air Strip as well as a herd of 75 elephants grazing and walking. On the way back home, we saw a Bateleur in the sky and a blacksmith plover mum protecting her three chicks on the rocks in the river. At

Grahams Tree a female leopard and not far from her a female hyena was both seen resting. While driving through the different areas at Mashatu beautiful birds were seen such as the red billed quelea, a lilac breasted roller and the carmine bee eater. We came across Diana's group of 14 elephants grazing, feeding, walking and one of the young bulls was very curious and came close to the car to inspect us. A curious young guy. One herd numbering more than 50 was observed at Moddergat. Unfortunately we did not find the leopard we were desperately searching for.

Friday, March 13, 2009

A cloudy morning. A male leopard on the move and a resting female hyena were seen near M1 crossing and the guests were delighted to spot the pack of 16 wild dogs again close to Khanda Camp. It was a quiet afternoon, no predators were spotted. Zebra, wildebeest, warthogs, steenbok, kudu, jackal, eland, baboons were however all out and about and there was more than enough to keep us busy on the drive.

Mashatu is not only game, Mashatu has a wealth of archaeological sites, dating back a very long time. Reason for all guests to visit the Mmamagwa Ruins. After the intro by Jeanetta, part of the group went for a walk and found scatters of pottery, with and without decoration. And also some beads, made from ostrich eggshell and glass. These beads were locally manufactured, probably on the rocks and used as jewellery and for trading. The other part climbed up to the cliff top of Mmamagwa Hill, where one had a stunning view of the surrounding area. Upon return we sat back and relaxed with a sundowner and watched the sun sinking rapidly downwards, changing from a bright golden colour to that deep and mysterious red of the typical African sunset.

Saturday, March 14, 2009

A cool night, now bright and sunny weather. We met Diana's group at Baboon's Bedroom and a group of 14 elephants with calves standing under a big Mashatu tree, browsing. The lilac breasted roller, a carmine bee eater and crowned plover were spotted and to our surprise the pack of 16 wild dogs were observed at Disappointment Koppie. They were resting and hidden in the long grass, but the adults got up to walk around a bit so we could observe their beautifully painted coats. The youngsters were sleeping. We also saw a lone elephant bull in full musth walking slowly in the direction of the Majale River. A group of mongoose with their babies was playing at the waterside and it is amazing that such small animals are capable of keeping wild dogs at a distance!

Another lone bull was seen grazing away at the foot end of Wildebeest Koppie and an hour later, again we met the pack of 16 wild dogs on the southern side of Wildebeest Koppie. Just outside of Main Camp a group of 4 warthogs was at ease and resting in the water of a little stream.

Dikgang and Oteng took us on a birds drive and we spotted beautiful birds like a golden breasted bunting, a dusky lark, sabota lark, the hamerkop, snake eagle, the beautiful paradise whydah, the white brown sparrow, a grey lourie and not to forget at the new bridge, black storks, a yellow billed stork, cattle egret and in the water a monitor lizard. On the way back to Main Camp we observed a lioness resting in the bushes and although the sun was down, we observed a herd of kudus, and an eland.



Sunday, March 15, 2009

During the early morning game drive, guests saw a herd of 30 elephants walking and grazing near Wallow. On our drive to the Vlei, we saw 4 male kudu in the company of a small herd of zebras. Some eland were also observed, as well as a group of 8 kudu with 2 youngsters in a dry riverbed. A small family unit of elephants with a tiny baby were spotted eating grass in the same area. Various birds were abundantly present: carmine bee eater, the black stork, lesser laughing dove, wattled starling, red capped lark, grey plover. Two kori busters were seen as they flew away - not seen very often considering they are the heaviest flying bird in the world!

In the afternoon, hyenas were observed at Dead Croton. The group consisted of 3 males and one female, all resting in the late afternoon sun. Near Nel's Windmill, a herd of 50 elephants were seen walking while plucking trunk-fulls of grass as they went along. Later that afternoon we came across a herd of 10 elephants and a baby – this was Agatha's group. After a beautiful sundown, we saw a large herd of wildebeest, some black backed jackals and a Verreux's giant eagle owl high up in the tree. Wildebeest, eland, impala and kudu were abundant. The highlight of the evening drive was encountering a magnificent leopard in the light of the spotlight.

Monday, March 16, 2009

It was sunny weather and 22 degrees Celsius when we set out on our drive. A small herd of 5 elephants was spotted grazing at Wildebeest Koppie. Shortly after, another herd of approx. 16 elephants and 3 babies were seen on top of the Koppie, all descending in their own pace. A little later on we met the lone bull in musth again - he got very annoyed as we approached him, and we thought it best to give him enough space. A herd of 75 elephants was seen at Kwedi Airstrip, while in a dry riverbed a saddle bill stork and a blacksmith plover with several chicks were spotted. Along the banks of the Majale River near Dispute Corner yet another group of elephants were seen drinking and playing in the mud along the riverbank. A small group of 5 elephants and a baby were observed at Crocodile Pool, and a somewhat larger herd of 10-20 elephants (a mixed herd consisting of cows, calves and adult bulls) were grazing. Birds were abundant, and we saw the lilac breasted roller, the cinnamon-breasted

bunting, the hamerkop, the woodland kingfisher and a flappet lark on our drives. Baboons, duiker, eland, giraffes, impala, the jackal, kudu, steenbok were also seen.

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Today started with a cool morning. It was time for an Ivory tour for some of the quests from the Tented Camp. For the other guests - a morning filled with beautiful birds. The hornbills, the Swanson's francolin, the woodland kingfisher, the African hawk eagle, cattle egrets accompanying, long tailed starlings, the lilac breasted rollers, the pied babbler, a hoopoe, various grey louries, and carmine bee eaters. We saw a warthog boar grazing on his knees near our vehicle, and a group of 8 giraffes with youngsters browsing in the distance. During the morning break at Dispute Corner, Majale River, Hestelle's group of 50 elephants was already in the river and enjoying the water - Play time: several young bulls were playing, wrestling with each other in and on the river bank. Another herd joined Hestelle's group, and all of a sudden a lot of noise was heard between the bushes which caused some unrest in the herd. The youngsters started running to the other side of the river. Whether this was a greeting or a dispute between elephants we will never know. However, this scene was a delight to everyone.

In the afternoon it was very hot at 38 degrees. We spotted Hestelle's group again at Three Mashatu's - all fast asleep under the shade of these huge trees. Some of the elephants were regularly dusting themselves trying to get rid of the annoying flies. Sofie's group was seen at Well Shaped Mashatu, drinking and walking, and some juveniles and a baby were mud wallowing and playing in the water.

At Lucent Crossing a herd of approx. 30 elephants was observed while drinking.

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

There was a cloudy start to the day. At McNiels Pool in the early morning we spotted an adult kori bustard walking amongst the thick vegetation. Apparently the animals are hiding, as only a herd of 30 elephants was seen at Disappointment Koppie. Although the zebra, wildebeest, warthogs, steenbok, vervet monkeys, impala and Black backed jackals were seen several times.

After sundown, on the way back to camp, we saw a spotted hyena at Eric's Donga near Majale Crossing.

Thursday, March 19, 2009

At Mmamagwa Ruins 3 lions were spotted - 1 male and 2 females - feeding on an unfortunate impala caught earlier in the morning. Zebras were seen with a young foal, and some bat eared foxes and warthogs came on our way. A group of 5 giraffes with youngsters were seen near Three Mashatu Dam. We spotted several groups of elephants in the Matabole River, one drinking and mud wallowing, the other one crossing the river, and another one resting under the trees.

A lone bull with beautiful tusks was seen a few times walking along the Matabole feeding on the grass as he moved along. Part of Ilze's group was observed at Cheetahs Koppie as they grazed, and the other part joined the group. All of a sudden the second part started to run towards the trees and were out of sight.

During the evening drive we came across a magnificent leopard on the hunt, and we followed as this elusive predator made its way through the undergrowth towards a wary herd of impalas. But tonight the impalas were lucky, and soon one of the big males which spotted the

leopard made an alarm call, and the impalas disappeared. A lone hyena was also seen near the Majale Crossing as he purposely walked and paid us little attention.

Friday, March 20, 2009

An amazing day for elephants with two groups of nearly 100 elephants each sighted on the morning drive. Along MMBA Ridge, two hyenas were seen on two separate occasions and a lone lioness was seen resting near Elephant Valley.

During the afternoon drive, the wild dogs were once more encountered near the Main Camp hunting impalas. The lioness was still fast asleep when we visited her later on in our drive, while several herds of elephants were peacefully walking and feeding on the Mopane trees in Elephant Valley as they moved along.

Saturday, March 21, 2009

There has definitely been a slight chill in the air of late – and as we set out early morning, it was clear that winter is on its way. As the morning warmed up, we met up with a large herd of elephants near Well-shaped Mashatu. It was Hestelle and Diana's groups. In one of the groups we spotted a tiny little baby - no more than a few days old. It was sticking very close to its mother, with a young female sandwiching it from the other side. Not far from the elephants, two hyenas were walking cautiously - avoiding the elephants. We have not seen the cats for a few drives, and this evening we set out on a mission to find the secretive leopard. After several hours of tracking and studying spoor along the pathways, we eventually tracked down a magnificent young male leopard near Grahams Tree. He was resting and clearly unaware of our attempts to track him down. We watched him for some time - enjoying the sunset with such an amazing cat.



29th March

During the morning drive, two herds of elephants were seen - one of 75 and another of 50. A herd of about 50 elephants was also seen near the Main camp in the afternoon. And, of

course, the ubiquitous impalas were seen, as were giraffe, jackals, monkeys, wildebeest and baboons. Some of the guests were lucky enough to see a bat eared fox!

Many predators were also seen during the drives. There were hyenas, leopards and wild dogs all on the move. The wild dogs had killed an impala and were feeding on it as we arrived. Just before sunset the alpha male and female were also seen mating after a lot of commotion! Luckily for those on the game drive, the dogs are easy to find since they have been hanging around close to Main Camp. Main Camp certainly seems to be a busy place today, as three adult hyenas were also seen walking around (probably following the dogs hoping for something to steal from them). A single male leopard was seen on the prowl.

30th March

Several herds of elephant were seen at several different river beds. At least 4 different herds came together – almost as if to say “hello”. Several young bulls were seen sparring.

Wildebeest, baboons and impalas were also seen altogether. Four bat eared foxes were seen on a drive which is an unusual and exciting sighting.

When the wild dogs were found, they had been fighting. Apparently, a younger male took an interest in the alpha female. The alpha male gave him a “clout”, and he was ostracized for a while. Another dog took care of him during his period of banishment. Probably all was forgotten by the following day.

The morning also had a sighting of one lioness doing what they do best ... sleeping. Some of those on the morning drive were fortunate to see a rock python, about 1.5 meters long, moving along near Disappointment Koppie. The wild dogs were seen once again, but this time further from the Main camp at M1 crossing. In the afternoon they were seen at Old Rock Camp, so they have been moving around today. A fairly active female hyena was seen at Fraser Jones on this afternoon too.

31st March

This morning's drive proved to be very exciting. At Dispute Corner, everyone was able to witness a newborn (perhaps only minutes old) baby elephant. A cow had just given birth when the guests arrived. That is an event rarely witnessed by people. That herd, and another in Elephant Valley, consisted of about 50 elephants each.

Also seen on the drive was a large group of hyenas at Old Rock Camp. This pack consisted of six adult females and two adult males. Earlier in the evening before the sun set, many zebra, giraffe and wildebeest were seen in a large open area.

Kori bustards (the largest flyer bird in the world) were seen in the distance, as well as a variety of other birds. Even a Lilac-breasted roller posed shortly before flying off.

During the evening, guests were fortunate to find a male leopard at Nel's Windmill. He was difficult to see because he hid himself in a dense thicket. There was also a herd of about 50 elephants walking at Dead Croton, occasionally showering themselves with dust. Also seen on the drive were baboons, a genet, banded mongoose, duiker, eland, giraffe, jackal, kudu, vervet monkeys, steenbok, warthog, wildebeest, zebra, a bush baby and several African wild cats.

1st April

One of the first elephants encountered this morning was the new mother with her newborn - most likely the same one seen the previous day. She was very protective of her little one. Later, a large herd of about 50 elephants was found at Dispute Corner, having a grand time in a mud wallow. Just outside Main Camp was a herd of elephants, consisting of several families. They were seen standing around in small groups. The older girls seemed to be trying to take a little nap while the youngsters played around their feet. At one point, an older bull was seen mating with a mature female, probably 35-40 years old, but was usurped by a younger bull. Two female hyenas were also seen at Fig Tree Crossing and one sub adult male was seen at Main Camp. A male leopard was seen at Nell's Windmill.

This morning, the wild dog pack was seen a Quelea Colony. At Old Rock Camp a herd of about twenty impala were seen with a new born - quite late in the season for there to be any new arrivals. Quite a few other animal species were also seen, including baboons, duiker, eland, giraffe, jackal, kudu, vervet monkey, steenbok, wildebeest and zebra.

Guests on the evening drive were lucky enough to find a juvenile male leopard feeding! A very large herd of elephant, perhaps as many as 200, was seen hanging around the Main Camp, mostly browsing and resting. At Pole Hill the wild dogs were lying about resting. This is a pack of 4 adults and 12 juveniles.

Other mammals seen today included baboons, bushbuck, duiker, eland, giraffe, impala, jackal, kudu, vervet monkeys, steenbok, wild cats, wildebeest and zebra.

2nd April

This morning a herd of about 20 elephant were seen along the power line. This group was not particularly active, mostly resting and browsing. Along the way many other species were encountered. Some baboons and impala shared a grassy area. Other mammals included bushbuck, eland, giraffe, jackal, kudu, vervet monkeys, steenbok, warthog, wildebeest, and zebra. At a stop along a river, a crocodile was seen sunning himself on the warm sand along the riverbank.

During the evening drive, at M1/M2 Crossing, about twenty elephants were found browsing. The wild dogs were also found at Pole Hill, milling about and resting.

3rd April

In the morning, a herd of about 20 elephants was seen at Lucenda Crossing. They spent most of their time browsing. Later, another herd of about 75 was seen at Crocodile Pool, digging in the sand for fresh water. Also encountered near Lucenda Crossing were the wild dogs.

The evening drive proved to be quite exciting. After a couple of hours of searching, a female leopard was found at Nell's Windmill resting. However, it didn't take long for her to get on the move. Some impala were seen in the bush - they had picked up on her scent. After some frantic chasing, it was obvious that she had captured one of them. This was a rare and special occurrence... to actually see her strangle her prey. She sat there very still until the impala was dead. She then picked it up and dragged it to a tree surrounded by thicket. She pulled her kill into the thicket and decided to feed in there, rather than to pull it up into the tree.

The wild dogs (four adults and twelve juveniles) were seen lying about, with a bit of playing and resting. At MJ-TK junction, a chameleon was spotted sitting on a tree branch next to the road. Some other interesting sightings included a kori bustard with a youngster, a spring hare

(also known as an African kangaroo), baboons, duiker, vervet monkeys, eland, giraffe, impala, jackal, kudu, steenbok, warthog, wildebeest, and zebra.

4th April

This morning's drive found about fifteen elephants at Dispute Corner, drinking. They like to dig holes in the sand to find clean fresh water. There were a couple of fairly new calves in the herd. There was also a couple of exciting sightings of reptiles. Two different pythons were discovered at Jackal's Koppie and Well Shaped Mashatu respectively. Each was about two meters long.

Later in the day, hyenas were encountered in two different places. Five were spotted at Eric's Donga (two males and three females) actively sniffing each other and the ground before they ran off. At Croc Pool one older female was seen trotting through the bush. A herd of about fifty elephants were sighted at Moddergat, enjoying their mud bath very much. Another smaller herd was found near Main Camp, grazing and drinking.

At Main Camp/ M1, a chameleon that had been bitten by an unidentified green snake was discovered in the road. The snake moved away when the vehicles approached, but its victim was clearly affected by the venom as indicated by the darkened flesh around the bite marks. No doubt the snake would return for its prey. And again, another chameleon was sighted, this one at McNiel's Pool. Many of the other typically seen mammals were baboon, eland, giraffe, impala, jackal, kudu, vervet monkey, steenbok, warthog, wildebeest, and zebra. Several bat eared foxes were seen along a riverbank.

5th April

In the morning, two active adult hyenas (a female and a male) were seen moving quickly through the grass at Sesana Sa Motha. Elephants were sighted in three different places. A herd of about ten was seen at Hammerkop Crossing. Another was found at Gabions. The third herd of about fifty was seen from Jackal's Koppie, grazing, walking and drinking.

Also seen from Jackal's Koppie (which provides a stunning 360 degree view of the landscape) were impala, zebra, ostrich, giraffe, jackals, wildebeest, and warthogs. Also seen throughout the morning were baboons, eland, kudu, vervet monkey, and steenbok.

The wild dogs were found at Bryce's Store, lying in the riverbed having a nice long rest.