



August 12th, 2007

Greetings from Arathusa,

There is a definite change in the air, and spring is certainly on her merry way! August has been a gusty month and the wind has driven all of us slightly mad. But I think it is a sign of "Out with winter and in with summer"!

No rain yet (of course). We look forward to summer for that. Days have been mostly warm, although we did experience a cold front which cooled things down again.



Matimba

A cub turns into a leopard as young "Matimba" gains a greater degree of independence on a daily basis.

The **elephants** have been back once more at our waterhole, entertaining guests who are enjoying lunch on the deck. We've also seen quite a few **giraffe** at the waterhole. We've had some gentle visitors in and around camp usually at sunset – the **Waterbuck** have been hanging around lately - sampling our grass!

Outside camp and on game drives over the last 2 weeks we have had some really exceptional **Big Cat** sightings. This run of good luck kicked off with a 'start to finish' sighting of the "Tsalala lionesses", accompanied by two cubs, waking up, playing and drinking - and culminating in the stalking and killing of a male impala.



Tsalala

The "Tsalala females" have recovered from their run in with the "Mapogo males". They killed an impala and are once more looking healthy.

The excitement had hardly faded when a couple of days later we had the opportunity to follow the seven **lionesses** referred to as the "Styx Pride". The drive ended with a rough and tumble sighting of them bringing down a male **buffalo** so close to the vehicle that a hasty retreat from the centre stage action was necessary.



Impala at lodge

A few of the regulars that come to drink in front of the lodge.

As soon as you think that it could not get any better, nature surprises. "Safari", the dominant female **leopard** in our area, brought down a grey duiker within minutes of being spotted. She proceeded to take it up a tree just in time to escape from a young male **lion** that has been roaming the area. Fearful she might lose her kill, she tried to take it higher up in the tree, with the young lion frantically trying to follow. Falling from the tree, the youngster was in turn surprised by the whole Styx pride storming down on him. He had a lucky escape ducking and diving through a herd of **elephants**. The Styx lions gave up the chase and returned ever- hopeful to the tree where Safari was still hidden. Luckily they did not see her and proceeded to move off. After a good day of feeding, Safari was surprised by another female leopard, "Salayexe", who with the help of some **hyena** managed to feed a bit before being chased off by the older leopard.



Xisiwana

Our dominant male leopard has been around again, this time lured back by this young female called "Xisiwana".

"Salayexe" then proceeded to make her own kill the very next morning.

Elephant, **rhino** and buffalo sightings have also been very good with a lot of animals in the area at the moment. Another great experience has been at the hyena den that we have been watching. We all feel like uncles to the little **pups**. Each day we see them grow up just a little bit more as they experience new things.



Hyena cubs.

A welcome break from the "big and scaries" was brought about by the discovery of a hyena den sight, home of these two cubs.

We look forward to what awaits us, and our valued visitors, over the next fortnight.

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All of us at Arathusa Safari Lodge