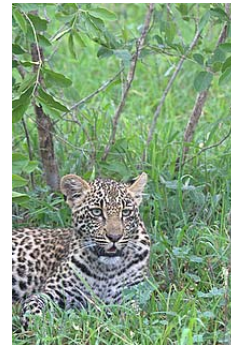
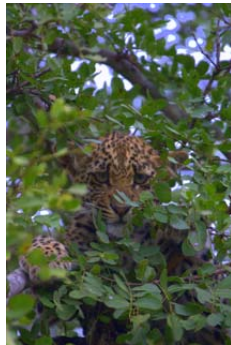


Posted 8th December 2008, for the period 15 – 30 November 2008



Greetings from Arathusa!

The last two weeks have been amazing! Although we haven't had any rain in the last few weeks, the rain we received at the beginning of November was enough to turn the bush a lush green, and to trigger the births of many species.

Baby animals are popping up all over the place. Andre was lucky enough to witness the birth of a Giraffe calf, and Ryan witnessed the birth of a Blue Wildebeest calf. A lot of Impala lambs have been born, but there are still many on the way. The insect and reptile life has increased with the rains, with a lot of snakes and lizards about.

Our leopards are doing well: a few of the females with cubs, some looking very pregnant and others mating. Salayexe and Tyson were seen mating again after she unfortunately lost her cubs. Safari and White-Cloth, two of our older females, are both looking very pregnant which is great, as they are both good mothers and have a high success rate when rearing cubs. Karula has had her cubs up on Vuyatela. Her two previous cubs, Shadow and Thandi, are both doing well - but are still looking for territories of their own. Mvhula (the young male) seems to have settled well in the Northern section of our concession, and continues to bring down large prey animals. We think that he and Mafufenyane may have had a bit of a "disagreement", as Mafufenyane has been limping quite badly over the last week or so.

Lions have not been as prevalent, but we have seen the Mapogo's and Tsalala's occasionally, and both prides look as if they are enjoying the "season of plenty" - they always look nice and fat when we see them. One strange sighting we did have was of the young male (Solo) feeding on a Leopard Tortoise. He has been pushed out of the pride, and this shows the extremes to which a young male lion may need to go when out on his own.

Elephant, buffalo and rhino have been plentiful, and it is not uncommon to head out in the morning and find all three species around our airstrip where they enjoy the lush grass and vegetation.

One of the highlights of the last two weeks has got to be the cheetah sightings. We are getting to see them more and more as they are spending a lot of time on our area. We have been seeing our big male and female with a young male cub as usual, but 4 young males have also been seen lately. Things could surely get a bit more interesting if these guys hang around for a while.

We can only hope we get a lot more rain as the dams are still low, but for the moment things are good, and we hope to keep experiencing amazing wildlife viewing over the Festive Season.

Kind regards
Andre & Rifos, Jason & Roy, Ryan & Maurice