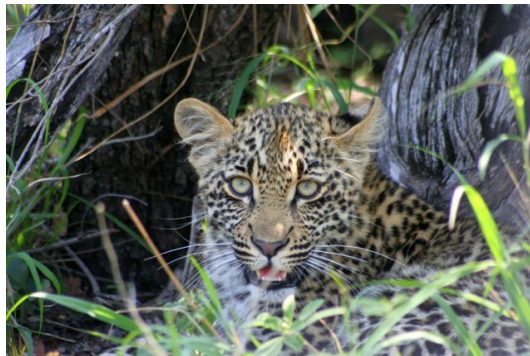




October 20, 2007

Greetings from Arathusa!

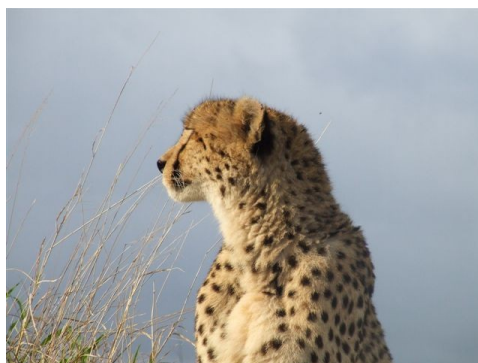
The last two weeks have seen a change from the game drive conditions of the previous months. Summer is well and truly upon us, with the first rain showers causing a couple of wet drives.



Nonetheless, game viewing has been excellent. More summer residents of the feathered variety have arrived. Black cuckoos, European bee eaters and Steppe eagles are just some of the birds to arrive back from their north-ward migration. The reptiles are also once more mobile, with regular sightings of boomslang, vine snakes and rock monitors. On one occasion a huge black mamba was also spotted.

As far as our mammals are concerned there was one disappointment in that the hyena den has moved more to the west. At this stage the clan seems to be alternating between different den locations, resulting in fewer sightings of the young cubs. The adults however, are up and about, with regular sightings of the adult members of the clan together.

The magic of sharing an open boundary to the greater Kruger Park has also come into play. Numerous sightings of a female cheetah as well as two males have made drives a pleasure. On one occasion we saw the female chase down a scrub hare, showcasing the tremendous speed of these magnificent animals.



The female wild dog that has been spotted in the past has also returned with three pups. The pups seemed to be healthy and energetic as we watched them play around mum.

Lions have also once more started visiting this part of the park frequently. On one memorable occasion, "The Styx pride" was found whilst playing with a rolled up Pangolin – a rare sighting and a treat! Another memorable sighting was when two big male lions stole an Impala kill from "Safari", our resident female leopard, close to the camp. They spent the rest of the night roaring away around the camp, the sounds of Africa accompanying dinner, sending chills up ones spine as only that sound can.



On that note, no update would be complete without a mention of "Safari" and her exploits. Our favorite girl provided us with two impala kills in less than a week. On the first occasion guests had the opportunity to see everything. From the stalk, through feeding, right up to the point where hyenas took the last scraps from her. She was last seen resting in the shade of a tree and looking fit and healthy.



It has been a wet, but incredible two weeks and the abundance of new vegetation after the rain can only bring more pleasant surprises.

Vriendelike Groete (Friendly Greetings)

All of us at Arathusa Safari Lodge