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Game Drive on 207 by Neil and Morag Hulett unit 45

Hi there Everyone, Well here we are back at Olifants once more, after a very busy month or so down at Collisheen, really great to be back, very dry of course, which is in sharp contrast to Natal where they have been having good rains.

Tuesday 6 am A beautiful morning, not a cloud in the sky, cool breeze to start but it's going to be hot later on, we pop down to the river to start, just past Arnold's house 4 waterbuck bulls then along the river and pels, impala, kudu, a troop of baboon and the usual mass of guineafowl, up pels pass and then through, first warthog, hide, onto sunset, along the 4 pylons and down to double, but it's only when we get to big, that we start to find some game, impala, a steenbuck, 7 zebra, coming into drink and a herd of 14 wildebeest, also wandering down towards the water, past natural pan, more impala, but all quiet at sand, so we continue onto nkhonkoni, very large herd of impala, at the bottom of buff plains, slowly moving towards the water, and at the water a herd of 5 kudu are drinking, over to warthog, but nothing about, we take palm loop to the office and as we come onto serengeti a lion is crossing, so by the time we get round to the otherside, he's disappearing into the bush, we pop round onto the RWLR, but no luck, so along to the office for fuel and home, then on the way home, baboon, kudu and impala.

Birds, marabou stork, along the river, then wahlberg's eagles (pairs) at warthog, at the crossing just below hide, at the brown ivory, just south of double, and we spot the african hawks, overhead near warthog.

After a very hot day, we leave the house around 5, lion are called at hide, 2 lioness's and the 4 cubs, well we join about 4 other cars, the cubs are active for awhile, but they all do what lions do best, sleep, anyway we move on as it gets dark, and make our way through nkhonkoni, impala, on buff plains, then we stop in at warthog, and after a short while, 2 elephant bulls come into drink and then a lion arrives, doesn't drink, but roars, and lies down in the grass, as flat as a pancake, making it very difficult to spot him, while searching, we find a beautiful african wild cat, coming into drink, and finally we can hear elephant across the RWLR, but they don't come into drink, home.

Wednesday 7 am, Once more a stunning morning, but it's going to be another hot one, first up, elephant, small herd, near Bev's bench, then through warthog, nothing about this am, so across to hide, and where the lion were last night are the cheetah mum and her 3 cubs, all looking great, the cubs have grown in the time we have been away, they move up along the water course that leads towards sand dam, eventually lying up under some bushes. we leave them there and go in search of the lions, don't find the pride from last night, but instead a lion and 2 lioness's, on the road down from jackal plains, as it's getting quite hot, they all settle down under some bushes so we go down to hide once more and on the other side of the dam, a large herd of elephant, are coming in to drink, well we get across on the other side, and enjoy some really fantastic viewing, especially a very tiny one, who has a marvellous time in the water, home, a super morning. Hope my pic's are OK, if so, will include a shot or 2 of the little one.

Another hot one, Eric calls in the cheetah, but before we get there they have moved off, so we go down the road from jackal plains towards hide, and find the 3 lion from this morning, who get up and slowly move down to hide for a drink, Eric & Sandy and ourselves follow them down, they then cross the parking area and move off towards kudu loop and we make for home, bump into a small herd of ellies in the palm at warthog, home.

Thursday 8 am, Away just on 5, going to be another hot one, make our way along to warthog, then nkhonkoni. a few impala, here and there, then over to sand, and lying near the solar panels, the 3 lion, that were at hide last night, they then move up the dry water course towards the 4 pylons, we go up and along the road, in the hope that they will come through, no luck, so we move on down to rhino & sable, impala, kudu and around the wallows 11 giraffe, and then on sable plains we find the cheetah family, lying up along the palm. We cross the palm on the single pylons, more impala and a couple of giraffe, back along zozo hut ext and then up snake alley, make our way through and back onto the 4 pylons and head north, no sign of the lion, so down to first big, a few impala about, but when we get to double, it's as though virtually every impala is there, at the water, of both dams, in the surrounding bush, a 1000 plus, fantastic sight, pass even more impala on our way up to the 4 pylons and then down to hide through jackal plains, just a few impala and a herd of 4 kudu & a rhino are around the dam and when we take the road to the RWLR, we bump into the large herd of elephant, we count 81 and amongst them some very tiny calves, after they have crossed the road we move onto the RWLR and are just about to go down and under the bridge and make for home, when we see a lioness and one cub, we then spot the lion lying on the bank in the shade, they are watching something in the water course, and it turns out to be another cub, dragging itself along, by it's front feet, it's back completely paralysed, trying to get back up the bank, we contact Mario, and Glen is soon there, to put the poor animal out of it's misery. So what was a super drive, turns into a tragedy, but I have already mentioned it in my stop press and Mario's follow up.

Birds, magnificent martial on the 4 pylons

It was sure a hot one, at 2 pm, 41 on our deck, not much to report, sat at sand in the hope the lion would come in to drink, no luck, home.

Friday 9 am, What a change in the weather, front comes through from the south, so lovely and cool, brisk breeze from the south, so out on my own, first up, bump into an elephant herd on the short cut between the palm and RWLR, then check around for the 2 lioness, who were seen there looking for their cubs last night, no sign, I continue along the RWLR and off at vetsak, on buff plains, plenty of impala, more down at nkhonkoni, I take the road up through buff plains and then on buff plains 3, the cheetah family are lying on one of the termite mounds, well mum is, while the 3 cubs race around like mad things, and finally she follows them, as they move further into the bush, bump into units 60 and 65, then a lion is seen down at the wallows so go that way, don't find the lion, but join other units watching another cheetah with

one cub, not quite as old as the other 3, and the mum has a collar with transmitter, Mario confirms she's from Tshukudu and her name is "Savanna" that's the morning drive.

This evening, along the RWLR, find the 2 lioness's, lying just off the road, calling for the cubs, they then cross under the single pylons and move up towards hide, we continue our drive, and besides 3 rhino, impala, a small herd of zebra and a couple of wildebeest all close to sand, not much else to report, a little later on, both the family of 4 cheetah and the single mum(Savanna & cub) are seen down around sable and the 4 pylons, east of rhino.

Saturday 10 am. Still cool and overcast, we go down along the river, in the hopes of seeing the lioness kill (warthog), happened last evening, nothing about, so along to warthog, we are just in time to catch a herd of elephant disappearing into the bush north of the pan, we go south along the RWLR, then off at sable and then round sakekan nwana, a few impala about, stop off for T,C&R at sable before taking the sable plains road and just before the single pylons, we find the cheetah family, and enjoy some great viewing, and across the single pylons, near the RWLR, a herd of elephant are moving south, at a steady pace, we then continue back along zozo hut ext, past rhino, up the 4 pylons and then down to both big and double, impala of course, a herd of kudu near double, and then on the way up to the 4 pylons 4 giraffe, through jackal plains and down to hide for breakfast, we continue to the club house, where we enjoy a very informative and interesting lecture on bats, given by Nigel Formby , there are already 2 bat houses up, at rhino pan, near the club house, and a few more have been installed near various members houses.

Stay home, from the deck, watch impala, waterbuck, kudu, baboon and giraffe, all come down to drink. That's the lot for the week, included a couple of shots of a baby elephant, having fun at hide, you all take care now,

Roars & Trumpets, N&M.....



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