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## Game Drive no 214 by Neil and Morag Hulett unit 45

Hi, Everyone,

Monday 23 am, Away early, last drive for Pam & Penny, off into the park and then home, first up a bull elephant asleep near the road to hide dam, then as we are watching some birds at hide, yellow billed stork, spoonbill, small flock of cattle egrets, all in their breeding plumage, plus a couple of woods sandpipers, we hear a lion call, up in the direction of nkhonkoni, and on the open plains, find one of the big blonde males, moving at a steady pace towards nkhonkoni/buff plains, he goes up buff plains 2 and we then lose him the woodlands between 2 & 3. otherwise, giraffe and zebra on snake alley, more zebra near single pylons on the road from sable and finally our first baby impala, near big dam, we check the lion out on the giraffe kill, 7 in all, still nervous of our car, move off a short distance and lie down, we enjoy a cuppa while watching them, then onto sable, on the plains, jackal family, 3 adults and one tiny pup, who all go down into the palm, more jackal on warthog, we have breakfast up at Geoff's table, home and Pam & Penny leave for the KNP.

This evening we take a drive along to buff plains, see if we can find the lion, again, no luck, but do find a herd of 7 wildebeest, on the road down to warthog, then another 13 wildebeest, on buff plains 3, we also find the jackal pups on the airstrip, another family with 2 pups, on a termite mound, at the top of buff plains 2, then along the road from rhino to sand, a third family also with 2 pups, so jackals are doing well, and finally at hide, watch a couple of bull elephants, just below the wall, home. Birds, a dozen little grebe's on nkhonkoni.

Tuesday 24 am, Cool overcast morning, impala here and there, a small herd of elephant, at the palm crossing from the office, then a pair of lion, on jackal plains, they move off towards the 4 pylons and then on the cut line with Rusermi, impala, kudu and wildebeest along the 4 pylons, near sunset plains, Sandy calls in some mating lions at pole 22/5 so we drift down that way, and it's the very pale lion and a lioness, then through the tunnel, past wild dog and down the e/e, again impala along the way, but except for the one new baby impala yesterday, no sign of any more. Monotonous larks are back, in numbers, a steppe buzzard, on the e/e road. Pop over to hide, this evening, besides a few impala, nothing else shows, home early.

Wednesday 25 am, Morning starts out, as clear as a bell, but then a cool breeze comes up from the south and by 7, all clouded over and then around 11 clears up once more, we go up onto the e/e and head north, as usual impala here and there, then along to hide and up to jackal plains, decide to stop on sunset and enjoy the rising sun on the mountains, suddenly from way down south, very faintly we hear lion calling, get as far sand and listen out again, not a sound, so down to big, and more and more baby impala are about, we go take a look at the giraffe kill, besides an unbelievable smell, and 2 vultures, nothing else about, a deep breath and we

continue on to the rusermi cut line and down to double for a cuppa, just a few impala about, just leaving when we bump into Eric, he's also had a very quiet morning, but saw alot of vultures, near sable and RWLR, so up the rusermi cut line for the 4 pylons and we continue down the dinidza cut line, and bump into a small herd of ellies, who move off deeper in dinidza, we go back past hide once more and head south, past sand and we take the road for rhino, just impala, and more little ones as well, spot the jackal family on the way, so first rhino, impala, across to sable more impala and 4 kudu, check out for the vultures, spot 2, rest must have lifted off, we decide to take the single pylons road right to the vetsak crossing, again impala, and then we turn down onto vetsak for the RWLR, a small herd of elephant feeding right next to the road so we enjoy some great viewing, while we enjoy our breakfast, along to the office, post etc, home.

Birds, pair of Bateleur, near double, as everything is so wet, there are just masses of flying ants about, so the birds, all the way up to eagles are having a wonderful time, tawny and wahlbergs, just standing right at the exit holes, eating them, as they come out, as you can imagine, everything is turning all shades of green but dotted about are the bright yellow flowers of the scrambled egg bush

This evening down to the river, baboon, impala, and bushbuck, the river dropping and slowly clearing.

Thursday 26 am, Into Hoedies, so no drive as such, impala, giraffe and kudu, along the RWLR. Stay home this evening, watch waterbuck, impala & warthog down along the river.

Friday 27 am, Out on my own, cool clear morning, but a very quiet drive, even the impala are scares, and not a single baby impala to be seen, I find 2 zebra, on the single pylons when I cross from hide, and 2 warthog, on the flood plains from the office, disappointing morning, but thats how it goes.

Around mid morning, Mario calls in some lion, tucked away in the bush near sand, so we pop along that way this evening, and find the lion we darted, lying near sand, but no sign of any others, we wait around till he gets up to see if all is 100's with his leg, seems to be slightly stiff but otherwise, walking on it OK, then a gale force wind comes through, very unpleasant, so we make for home and later on in the evening, a storm rolls over us, great.

Saturday 28 am, Overcast and cool but we are away early, 6mm in the gauge, impala with babies on kudu, we go north along the e/e and then across to hide, as we pass under the single pylons, 4 elephant bulls and then just at the turn for hide, a small breeding herd, 100 m's down the road is a tree pushed over so we reverse and take the road for the 4 pylons and just after the road down to the Dinidza cut line, we find the 3 lioness and cub, all lying up close to the road, enjoy some good viewing, all looking in great condition, while sitting there, hear lion calling down towards hide? and another answering further away, we think from sand, maybe the guy from last night? we go in search of both lots, no luck, so continue our drive, from sand back past hide and then through sunset, impala and 4 zebra, double and big, quiet so past natural pan, find another small herd of ellies, check out sand once more, and then head off down to rhino and then sable, except for a few impala, very little about, no sign of any more baby impala, we make our way along zozo hut ext, then up snake alley, through buff plains, again impala dotted about and a couple of giraffe, near nkhonkoni dam, past sand again and then on kudu loop, Morag suddenly says "there's a chameleon", and sure enough near the top of a bush willow, matching

it's surroundings perfectly, a beautiful large chameleon, a pretty good spot!!!!  
decide to have our breakfast back at hide, on the off chance the lion may come in, no luck, so along to the office and then home.

Birds, A good view of a Black Stork at hide.

This is a day early, we are away into the Kruger for a few days, down at Lower Sabie, so no drive till the 13th, so till then, you all take care now,

Roars & Trumpets, N&M....

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