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Game Drive no 219 by Neil and Morag Hulett unit 45

Hi, Everyone,

Monday 25 am. A hot overcast morning, not a very pleasant start, clears up partially as the morning, we really need some good rain. First up the 2 wildebeest at idube, enjoying the cool mud, both enjoying a good roll, then on kudu a small herd of impala. Along the e/e and in at the top of the airstrip, impala dotted about, on the airstrip and warthog plains, bump into Brian & Claire, they go along the palm and we cross over at vetsak for buff plains. Buff plains one, plenty of elephant feeding and slowly moving towards buff 2, we go round and find even more elephant, already there, enjoy some good viewing. We take snake alley and across to sable and sable plains, again impala in numbers and we count a herd of just bachelor impala, 105 in all and a small herd of wildebeest with one calf, plus 4 zebra. Continue along to the single pylons and then south and come round past sakekan nwana, more impala and a couple of zebra, past sable once more and over to rhino. Just after we cross the palm and turn right for rhino, one of the lion is lying under a tree, he's full as tick. While sitting there we can hear a lot of impala blowing over towards rhino pan so when Simon & Ashley arrive, we go in search of any more lion. Along the palm, 4 pylons and back past rhino, in the mean time Brian & Claire have arrived and the lion has moved off towards the wallows along the palm, we find him again, getting hot so goes deeper under the bush. We move on, bump into that elephant herd coming down towards rhino, we continue on the old road for vetsak and warthog, impala and a couple of giraffe, we decide to head for home via pels, very little about along the river, some impala, and finally near the house, 4 of the nyala does, haven't seen them for some time, home.

Birds, Near the lion, the immature martial, a african hawk soaring over rhino pan, and a number of white backed vulture and a couple of maribou along the river, in various trees. Bit of thunder and lightning about, we stay home.

Tuesday 26 am, Rain, fantastic, already sent stop press, still raining hard, 90 at the office, 20 at the gate.

This evening, its cleared up so we take a drive around, more to check out some of the dams, well as you can imagine, all full, the palm did run, but by the looks, just for a short while, impala, wildebeest on buff plains and at warthog. We bump into Brian and Claire and stop off for a chat and drink at warthog pan, 6 jackal appear, looks like parents and 4 s/a pups, anyway they all trot past us and go down into the palm, home.

Wednesday 27 am, A repeat of yesterday morning, around 4 or so, a couple of storms pass over us, not as violent as yesterday, and another 50mm in the gauge, and 38 down at the office. Still raining and it looks far more settled in today, so no drive. Brian, Claire, Simon & Ashley join us for a sort of joint lunch, between Claire & Morag, end result, a great luncheon party, we put the world right, and when they leave at around 8,30 or so, decide it's a bit late for an evening game drive!!!!

Thursday 28 am, A very heavy ground mist, covering all the valleys, the deck just saturated and already the humidity, is right up. Add another 4mm to the total, bringing it to 144mm. so far this week, just water, water everywhere, all dams full to overflowing the palm and smaller streams flowing as well. The only down side, the roads have taken quite a hammering, lots of work for the road crew in the next few weeks, and by the look of the weather, wont be surprised if we don't get another storm again tonight. Game wise, plenty of impala about, but more dispersed with so much water about. Wildebeest at warthog, and on kudu loop, just along from sand, the 3 little piglets, still OK, on the flood plains, just before unit 1. Then a little further on 2 giraffe. The Olifants is running full and strong, but at this stage doesn't look like it will go over the cause way, may change if they release more water up stream.

Birds, spoonbill and 2 yellowbilled storks at nkhonkoni, a pair of greenbacked herons & a grey heron, all sitting around a waterhole in the spillway below hide, waiting for something to show, the pair of bateleurs, near big, look like they may have added another stick to their nest, progress.

After a very hot and humid day, a gale force wind comes through from the south, there's thunder

in the air, and signs of more rain, we stay home, see what the night holds.

Friday 29 am, No rain during the night, but the morning is cold, windy and very over cast, lots of low cloud racing by and the odd spit and a spot. Actually not sure why we went driving, quiet and unpleasant, find impala, wildebeest and zebra on warthog, between sand and hide, more impala, up to jackal plains and down at double, the odd impala about. At big, another herd of impala, and we bump into Brian & Claire, they are off into the Timbavati, for a few days, we continue past natural pan and south along the 4 pylons for rhino, we find impala, giraffe and wildebeest, across to sable, more wildebeest and impala, at the wallows, we take the cut line road for the single pylons, find a couple of rhino, then along the single pylons, the short cut past Geoff's table, office and home early.
No improvement in the weather, we stay home.

Saturday 30. A day early this week, we are off into the Park, for a few days, staying at Satara, so till the next Drive, you all take care now.

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

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