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Game Drive no 227 by Neil and Morag Hulett unit 45

Hi, Everyone,

Monday 3 am, Another misty start to the morning, not as thick as yesterday, so lifts and clears much quicker, up kudu, then down the short cut, nothing left of the giraffe kill, even the smell has gone and so have all the vultures, we go left along the palm then right, across the palm and railway and straight up the hill for hide, except for a few impala and a couple of zebra, nothing else about we go hide loop onto kudu loop for sand, again a few impala here and there, so up to the 4 pylons and down past natural pan for big, and just as we stop we hear a elephant trumpet towards double , so away we go but except for more impala and the herd of wildebeest, no sign of any elephant, we stop for a cuppa at double, up the cut line with rusermi and lying on the road at olifants pan, a couple of rhino, a cow and her s/a calf, we continue and go right towards big then left along tamboti link, just a few impala about, we turn south on the klaserie cut line and then back down to big, couple of jackal and some more impala. We decide to go along the engwe ext. and where that sheet erosion is we find the 2 male cheetah lying up, enjoying the morning sun. (These are the same two that killed the waterbuck, below unit 60 and we enjoyed some good viewing when they were on e/e road) both very relaxed, then down the klaserie cut line, rhino and we stop off at sable for breakfast, we continue down to wallows, impala and a few zebra, up the cut line and we join the single pylons and then down to warthog. On the runway, more impala and 3 jackal, more impala on warthog, home.
Birds, Darter at Hide, immature dark chanting gos, near big and on the single pylons road, pair of bateleur eagles, good view on a dead tree.

Tuesday 4 am, Beautiful morning, some high cirrus cloud to the east, makes for a stunning sunrise, up kudu and then down to the palm and along to warthog, a lone impala at the water but across on the airstrip, plenty of impala, a herd of wildebeest, and 6 jackal, all lying on the runway. We cross at vetsak and go south on the RWLR, in and round ian's loop, large herd of impala and when we join the e/e road again, we find fresh lion tracks , but they soon leave the road so we continue onto the sable turn off, back down the single pylons, disturb a large troop in the pylons, and when we cross the palm find plenty of impala, a couple of giraffe and some zebra, and lying on a termite mound, a couple of jackal, enjoying the warm morning sun. We go right along zozo hut ext. find more impala and zebra then a lone rhino bull, near the wallows, we find more impala near sable but we move over to rhino, nothing about though, we stop for a cuppa anyway. Up the 4 pylons, take the link road onto the road for sand and on phone clearing, plenty of impala once more and 6 rhino. There's more impala plus a herd of zebra, we take the road for big and just before the 4 pylons, 5 giraffe are staring intently at some thing, eventually out from some bushes appears a female ostrich. Lisbon is pretty quiet this am, except for some impala between the 2 dams and the hippo and croc at double thats about it. when we cross at star crossing more impala and a few zebra and then through jackal plains and onto hide, impala dotted about, we stop for breakfast before making our way down to the office, fuel post etc, and then along the flood plains another 4 giraffe and a herd of impala, home.
Birds, Find one of the Bateleur on their nest, near big dam, bit of wishful thinking there.

We pop down to the river this evening, cross onto ON and park along the river road, we heard that elephant were seen here this morning, but except for a

trumpet or two, no sign, watch a couple of hippo keeping out of the current by hiding behind some rock, then suddenly from around a bush a beautiful leopard appears, checks us out and starts walking towards us but then moves up into the bush, we give him time then go up on the upper road and find him walking along the road, definitely going some where, because he's at a fast walk, he leaves the road and we lose him once more, and then closer to causeway we find him, again, we are not far from the causeway now so go ahead, maybe he will cross over, so park on the new section, he comes out but back tracks and is gone.

Wednesday 5 am, A clear cool morning, but very little to report, we go down to the river and along pels, then along madrid, find our first impala and a troop of baboons sitting on the roof of unit 73, up to wild dog, nothing about, decide to take the old e/e road to the cut line, herd of 5 zebra just crossing over onto drifters, down the cut line through the tunnel and we continue along our cut line with venice and then down rhino walk for sable, a few impala about and 2 jackal, from here past the wallows, over the palm and up snake alley, find 4 giraffe, on buff plains, impala dotted about, alot of rams about, mostly on their own, coming into the rut of course, so these guys, a bit on edge, nothing around nkhonkoni, so across to sand then along to sunset plains, again a fair amount of impala, through jackal plains, more impala, we continue on and go down the centre road for hide, then across to warthog, for breakfast, find the herd of 11 wildebeest and a few impala, we take the palm loop all the way to the office, on the flood plains, impala and 4 giraffe, thats the drive. Birds, couple of black duck and a pair of little grebes all on nkhonkoni and a gabar gos at warthog.

Thursday 6 am, Once more a beautiful morning, a nip in the air, winter on it's way, we hear lion calling before we leave the house, in the direction of hide????, can't find them though, plenty of general game about this am, impala, wildebeest herd around the waterhole on warthog and 4 of the jackal on the runway, then over to buff plains and there are plenty of impala about, plus 5 zebra, near nkhonkoni and a giraffe, we continue onto sand dam and up to the 4 pylons for big and again there's impala everywhere, the same applies for around big and double and another very large herd under the 4 pylons at star crossing, we take the road down through jackal plains for hide, impala, impala plus zebra and wildebeest aqnd we find a lone dagga bull lying in the water, but moving away on the open plains towards nkhonkoni the rest of the buffalo herd, well over a hundred, very impressive all out in the open. we return home, via the office and on the flood plains, near the club house 5 more giraffe and of courde impala here and there all the way to the house.Great drive with so much general game about. Birds, martial on the 4 pylons, above star crossing, fish eagle eating it's kill, in a tree near nkhonkoni, can't make out what it is though.

Friday 7 am, Clear to start, but then cloud moves in from the west, bit miz to start, but partly clears up. Now besides all the impala we see everywhere we go. I said to Morag, "I don't think we are ever out of sight of at least one impala at any given time", so besides the impala, we did see a lone rhino bull, on the short cut down to warthog, then giraffe, zebra, wildebeest and jackal at warthog and on the runway. Along zozo hut road more zebra, a couple of jackal and then on the extension of zozo, more zebra and a giraffe, we move over to wild dog and find a herd of 5 kudu coming into the water, back along the RWLR and right for nkhonkoni, a small breeding herd of 7 elephant moving onto buff plains, and on buff plains another 2, plenty of wildebeest, zebra and giraffe plus a family of 5 warthog, across to sand and down to first big then double, near the brown ivory, another herd of 6 kudu, we stop off and enjoy our breakfast on wall at double, croc and hippo keep us company. Up to star crossing, and more zebra, through jackal plains and down to hide, a couple of giraffe and on the short road to the RWLR another herd of elephant, and finally, just below idube, an elephant bull, carrying some impressive ivory. Eric calls in a mating pair of lions on the mahlabetsi, seems as though most of the lion are down in that area at the moment. Well thats the drive.

Saturday 8 am, Overcast morning, cool breeze from the south, once more, besides all the impala, wildebeest, 5 jackal & zebra on warthog and on the bottom of the runway. Across to hide and we find 2 lion, one of them has had a good smack on his right eye, doesn't look too good at all, after a short while they get up and move into thick bush,

we continue on the road to nkhonkoni then come past sand and back along kudu loop, zebra and wildebeest, along the way, don't find the lion though, so round once more to sand , then up to the 4 pylons and down to big and double, between the dams, wildebeest and a giraffe, then up at star crossing, more zebra and wildebeest, we decide to go south, first along sunset then past sand and onto rhino, take the little link road onto the 4 pylons, zebra and wildebeest, past rhino and near the wallows, zebra and giraffe, and at sable more zebra, wildebeest and a couple of giraffe, then sable plains, across the palm loop and back along zozo ext, zebra, up snake alley through buff plains, warthog and a couple of giraffe, between buff plains and the single pylons, on the vetsak road, we find a kill, impala ram, hanging in a marula tree, looks very fresh, but most of it eaten , just the head, horns and hind legs plus some skin remaining, so we spend some time there but no sign of any leopard, we move onto Geoff's table for our breakfast. Past the office and we head for home, on the flood plains, giraffe and 2 hogs, looks like the last of those 4 piglets, home.

Sunday 9, Beautiful day. Have included some pics, the white fronted beaters, in the river bank at the causeway, the 2 cheetah, and a view from our deck showing how green it is and how full the Olifants is, especially for this time of the year. Thats the lot, you all take care now.

Roars & Trumpets, N&M....



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