

Newsletter

Tamboti
Lodge

Summer | Issue 1 | April 2025



FROM DROUGHT TO DROWNING ...

Drought

As mentioned in my previous report, we had an extremely low rainfall season in the 2023/2024 summer, which resulted in a very difficult winter for most herbivores in the Park.

Elephants bore the brunt of the lack in food supply, with around 35 animals perishing. This process, though brutal, is necessary for population regulation and the benefits of the losses can not be argued. A further 30 Elephant were euthanized due to poor body condition, taking the total losses to 65, that we know of. Other species affected were Kudu, Giraffe and Buffalo. However, not many deaths were recorded

For the Hyeana, Jackal, Vultures, Lions & Leopards, drought equals easy meals and there was no complaining from any of them.



And then, it rained

And rained some more. And would you know it, it is still raining. To date we have recorded 811mm of rain for the summer of 2024/2025. Indicators show that we have now seen the last of the rains for the season.

It has been years since we saw the plains outside the Lodge so green and lush, heavily laden with wild hibiscus and zinnias

With the higher-than-average rains comes the creepies and the crawlies and this season saw the arrival of the Armoured Ground Crickets, last seen 8 or 9 years ago. When these Crickets breed out, the Storks arrive and with that we saw flocks of thousands. White Storks and Abdim's Storks attempted to eat as many Crickets as they possibly could.



Plains Game



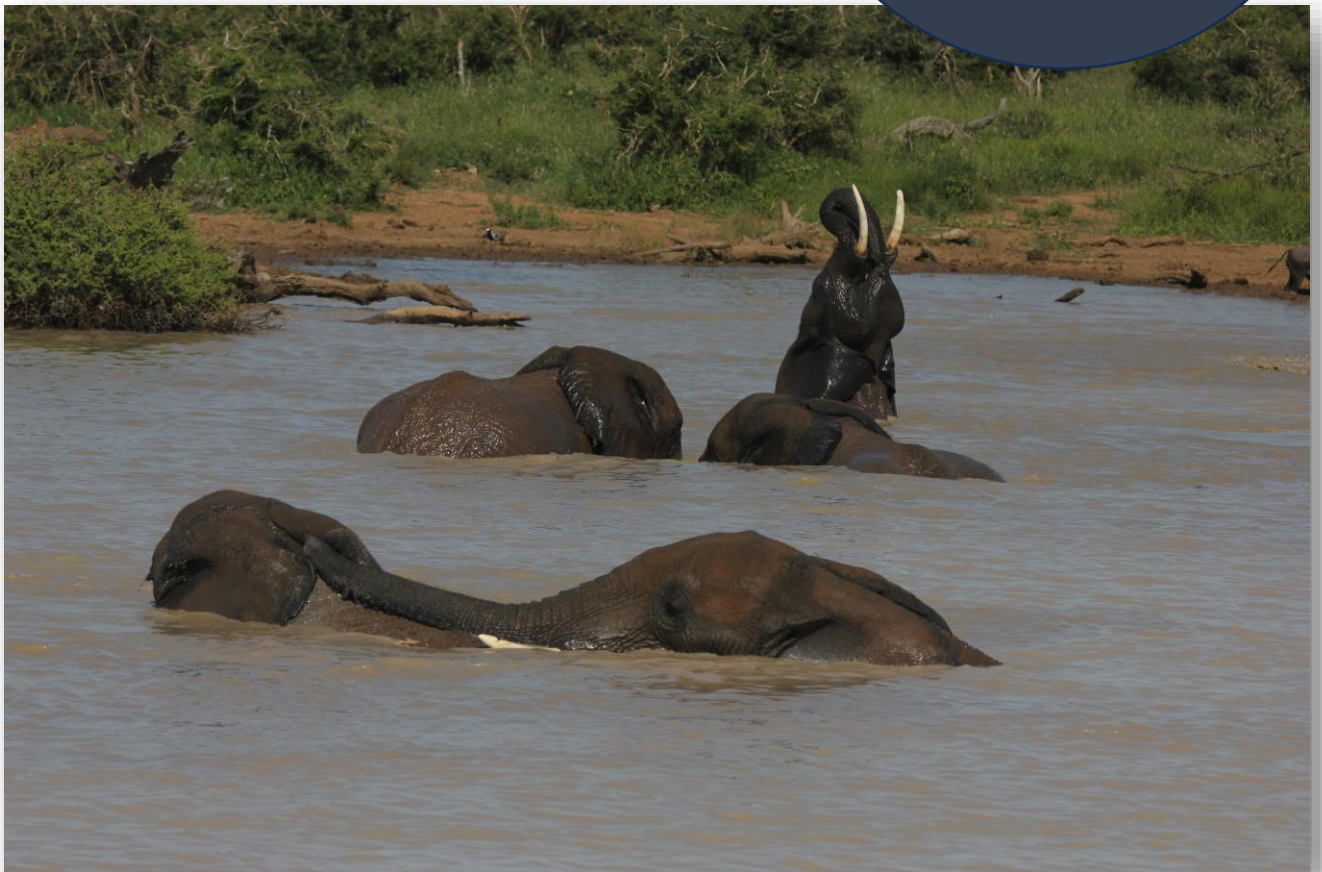
have all
had
plenty
calves,
lambs
foals and
piglets, as
the joy of
the
greenery
was
restored,
after the
brutal dry
period.
Day to
day life
for
Madikwe
animals is
once
again just
a little bit
easier.

Some excellent news ...

I am very happy to report NO Rhino poaching cases in Madikwe for 2024 and no cases thus far for 2025.

Ele's

The Elephants seem to have mostly dealt with the trauma of their losses and have been seen enjoying life again.







Buffalo,

notoriously grumpy.



have also
embraced the
water and have
taken up
swimming.



Leopard

Leopard sightings in the Enselbergs have improved dramatically, with the three local males and two females now residing in the rocky areas. The Amphitheater has become a regular spot for sighting these spectacular creatures.



Cheetah



There have been even more changes to the Cheetah dynamics in the Park. The remaining Cheetah brother from the coalition that used to control our area, has been missing for months now. This has given two other single males the opportunity to take over their previous range. The one male in particular seems to like the area around the Lodge and we see him regularly at our waterhole, hunting young Kudu.

The young female (Selati) that was introduced in late 2023 has also been roaming around the Lodge. She had 5 cubs west of Moakeng in January, but sadly these cubs were discovered by the Tchaba pride and there were no survivors. She has mated again and will hopefully have some more success this time.

The female Cheetah, with the 5 bigger cubs, is doing very well and these 5 male cubs are getting stronger and wiser by the day. They roam as far west as Moakeng dam, but seem to prefer the area east of Tamboti. These clowns love to perform and play can get pretty rough at times





Lion



The Tchaba Lion pride is doing very well and this family is growing again after years of intensive management. The Pride now totals 13. At the ripe old age of 19, the Bolakega female is still leading this pride. Her oldest daughter, which everyone knows as the limping Lioness had 1 cub in December and has successfully introduced it to the pride. The Matsumi female and her now sub-adult female cub are doing well. The Matsumi has mated again so we should see some more cubs in June/July. The Tchaba Shesa female has 4 small cubs which have been a great addition to the pride. Lastly the Tchaba Sheshe's previous, now 2 year old female cub is growing up fast and very much resembles adulthood.

The two males are seen regularly on the plains close to the Lodge and have both mated with the Lionesses in the pride. The Tsimega male, however, seems to be the one that enjoys spending time the cubs. The Tswalu male hurt his back and has a slight limp, as a result.







Wild-Dog

Both Wild-dog packs added some pups to their ranks, with the bigger pack adding 5 pups and the smaller pack adding 4. Unfortunately, as can be expected some pack numbers have been lost along the way. The bigger pack now totals 9 and the smaller pack, 6.

The Alpha female from the big pack is currently pregnant and should start denning in early May. I will keep everyone posted on new developments.





Sighting of the Season



While driving along the western fence one morning, we came across a Pangolin coiled up in the grass. He was fairly shy so would coil each time he spooked. We eventually left him to settle down. When we returned later on, he had already wandered off.

We hope you have thoroughly enjoyed this short wild-life update.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Till next time

