

Governors' Camp March Game Report, Masai Mara

The average temperatures dropped to about 28 C in March after a fairly hot February. This was due mostly to the amazing rains that we received during the month, amounting to 741mm (3 inches). We have had a very good rainy season so far with only a few weeks break since December last year, and the Kenya Meteorological Dept is predicting plenty more to come, which is welcome news after the long drought that Kenya has endured. During March we enjoyed a mixture of weather, some good storms coming in after sunny mornings, a couple of rainy mornings and some cloudy days. The storms have brought stunning cloud formations all of which have made for some stunning photographic moments. All the rain and sunshine has meant fabulous growing weather in the Mara. The grassland plains are extremely lush, high and seeding. Animals such as warthog, hyena, bat-eared fox and aardvark have been plentiful. It has been a quiet month in the Mara, giving our guests that great feeling of the huge open expanse that only the Mara can give you. **The BBC have been back at Governors' camp filming the cat activity in the area and have given us some valued information over the past few weeks**



Photos Courtesy of Chala Cadot

We continue to have incredible amounts of elephants through the *Warburgia* forest along the Mara River and into the Musiara Marsh. There has been an increase in the number of elephant bulls in the area, with a fair few in musth, following up herds of females which may be in oestrus. Our guides are having to approach a little more carefully these days, as males in musth have high levels of testosterone and can be a little aggressive.

We heard an amazing story from one of the BBC vehicles; whilst out filming on the boundary of Maasailand near the Marsh a massive elephant bull took exception to a Masai cow passing by and attacked it, tusking it and severely wounding the animal. The Maasai herdsmen saw this at a distance and requested the BBC vehicles help, which they gave. However the Marsh Pride of lions had seen all the commotion and as the Maasai had mysteriously disappeared into the steel box (BBC car), they took advantage of their absence and raced over towards the injured cow. The scene was a large number of lions including cubs and a vehicle with irate Maasai herdsmen all converging on the poor Maasai cow. The vehicle did however beat the lions to it with one of the Maasai launching out to protect his beloved cow. This scared the lions off and they retreated, the cow did not fare so well though.



Photos courtesy of Samuel Kiplangat and Chala Cadot

The same large herd of about 400 buffalo have been moving through the long grass plains between the marsh and over to rhino ridge.

We have had plenty of giraffe about the forest line mostly eating on *Teclea*, they have been grouping into herds of up to 30 individuals. A great scene when they all move on to the plains.

A Marshal Eagle was seen taking a Banded Mongoose off the ground and flying off with it, must have been very difficult to contend with in the air.

A large pack of 30 hyena were found hunting topi up on Rhino ridge, they managed to take a young one down. Whilst a single hyena had managed to kill a young impala by its self near the Mara River, it is likely the impala was ill as they are normally much quicker than a hyena.

The Marsh Pride of lions now has a new 3 week old cub from 'Bibi'. The total number of lions in this pride is now 26. The pride splitting into three distinct groups as hunting becomes more difficult in the long grass. 'Lispy' had moved off with the sub adults, 'White-eye' and 'Bibi' with their cubs and the two males 'Romeo' and 'Claude' are spending most of their time with the three Graces and their cubs. On the 25th 21 of them all came together to spend some time as a pride and bond. They have not been very successful hunting, with many relieved warthogs managing to out run and out manoeuvre their attacks. They have been seen hunting and killing a reedbuck, a few small warthogs and a couple of young waterbucks.



Photos courtesy of Chala Cadot

The Paradise Pride of lions are still living up to their formidable reputation of hunting hippo. The 5 younger male lions have apparently killed about 10 so far, Notch reportedly not involved. No one has actually witnessed the event, but it is assumed that the lions follow a hippo out far enough away from the water, so as they cannot make a quick escape. They then hamstring the animal to immobilise it and the long process of killing the poor animal begins. 3 females and 7 cubs have been seen regularly with Notch, but less so with the younger males. Besides the hippo feasts they are at times fortunate enough to have, there is a little more plains game available to them than the Marsh Pride.

The Ridge Pride are still the same two males seen with a few females, two of whom we have always known about. One of which is not in such good condition. The males have also been sighted consorting with a couple of lionesses from the Marsh Pride, resulting in a small scrap and the lionesses moving on.

There have been some good sightings of leopard this month. On a fairly regular basis, our leopardess in the local area between Governors' Camp, Il Moran and the marsh forest 'lake Nakuru'. She was sighted with a young waterbuck kill in the marsh area.

A huge male was seen up a green-heart tree with an impala kill near the Mara River.

Also Olive has been hunting along the croton thickets near the River, unsuccessfully, a hard task during daylight hours.

At the beginning of the month a male leopard was in Olive's territory and they had a heated encounter. He was in search of a female in season, which she was obviously not as she has young cubs that are still dependant. She acted submissively rolling on her back, but growling aggressively forcing the male to move on.

There have also been the odd brief sightings of other unknown leopard along the river-line.

The three boys have been the most active cheetah in the area. They have made numerous kills, a couple of which were stolen by hyena which have been unrelenting in these lean times.

The female cheetah and her cub have so far beaten the odds and are making a good living and staying out of harms way.



Photos courtesy of Chala Cadot

Shakira is still on the Transmara side of the river, with very little news of her activity.

We had a different female cheetah in the area, which was seen hunting a gazelle which she missed. However 5 minutes later whilst resting, a male gazelle went running right by without noticing her crouching in the grass - she got that one!

Altogether we have had a wonderful month of game viewing and we look forward to the promise of more rain in April.

We hope to share the magic of our corner of the Mara with you sometime soon.

All our camps are now on Facebook and you can follow the action as it unfolds in the Mara, enjoy some of the latest photos from the Masai Mara as well as updates on whats going on in all our camps.

Here are the links to our facebook pages:

[Governors' Camp](#)

[Little Governors' Camp](#)

[Il Moran](#)



Governors' Camp Collection
KENYA | RWANDA

Tel: +254 20 273 4000-5
reservations@governorscamp.com
www.governorscamp.com