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LONDOLOZI LEOPARD QUARTERLY JUNE 2007

Dear All

It is an honour to bring you the second Leopard Quarterly to let you all know a little about how the amazing cats of Londolozi have been getting along over the past 3 months. I cannot share too much information with you as I am sure that you will then not return soon enough to visit us! Here are the highlights in the lives of the Londolozi Leopards since the last Quarterly.

LEOPARD NEWS

3/4 Female has certainly not ceased to amaze the team and guests alike by bringing out yet another cub for all to see. At almost 4 months of age the little male has been seen at 3 kills by a lucky few. He has already met Lex's Male on one occasion and there appeared to be no danger for the cub during the encounter. 3/4 Female seems to be having a challenging time with Lex's Male as he manages to find many of her kills and he thieves them, the far smaller female spends a great deal of time trying to steal her hard earned meals back!



N. de Woronin ©

Sunset Bend Female was seen mating with Lex's Male and a short few weeks later her single male youngster was located outside of her territory for the first time.

Sunset Bend Young Male moved away from his mother for a time and was spotted pursuing a very large herd of buffalo. The youngster appeared to track the buffalo herd by smell and managed to find himself among flying hooves more than once! He did not manage to capture one how ever!



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Mxabene Female is still proving to be a phenomenal mother and has been seen to capture prey Almost every second day for her young male. She still does not hoist all her kills however, the reason for this remains uncertain. On an evening she was discovered with 2 kudu calf kills, neither of them stowed in trees and thus the hyenas thieved them both within a short period of time.

Mxabene Young Male is growing incredibly fast and he was spotted making one of his very first kills. He eyed a Hadedea Ibis bird high in the branches of a tree and some how, with nature on his side and not on that of the bird, he caught his prize! In true Leopard fashion, he plucked his meal carefully before consuming it!

Dudley River Bank Female is also finally having a chance to raise her youngsters and at more than 6 Months of age her 2 male cubs are reaching a truly inquisitive stage in their lives. One cub is noticeably braver than the other and he has gone as far as to touch the game drive vehicle out of pure interest!

Nottens Female and her daughter have not been spotted in a while but due to the phenomenal trackers who have seen tracks of them both of we are almost certain that they are well.

Xidulu Female has still not brought her cub across into the area but she has been seen on a few occasions hunting in her old territory indicating that the land that she once used so much is still part of her terrain.

Trogon Female was "caught" out having a drink at the Camp Dam in front Varty Camp! This little female puts so much effort into not being seen that she appeared quite stunned as a vehicle spotted her but she did slink off rather shyly and quickly once she realised her mistake!

44 North Female is holding the area that she acquired very well and she has been seen hunting on numerous occasions. We are not sure how ever of the status of her cubs and we look forward to finding out more in the near future.

Vomba Female has always been deemed the "Mistress of Disguise" but over the past months she has spent a great deal of time in the Londolozzi Camps providing the most phenomenal viewing to guests and staff within the comfort of the lodge! One afternoon we managed to follow her on foot as she stalked a group of Bushbuck in Founders Camp. She was aware of our presence and she glanced in our direction for a short time only before she continued her hunt as if we were not even there! We spent over half an hour with her before we lost sight.

Vomba Young Female has followed her mother into the camp and one evening she displayed Vomba Females' incredible acceptance of people. As I rounded the corner back to my room she simply lay in the path way for a minute...and when she decided to move away it was in a slow elegant motion as if there was no one else in the world!

Vomba Young Male is slowly becoming more comfortable with game drive vehicles and it seems that he may have made his first kill. He was spotted in front of the spectacular new Granite Camp with what appeared to be a Rock Monitor Lizard!

Mhangene Male has been shifting his territory further south possibly due to the movements of Lex's Male. He has been viewed in the area that Kinky Tail Male once inhabited and it seems the he is now the sole male in that part of the reserve.

Lex's Male constantly appears to be pushing his range boundary and he definitely appears to have ended his cub killing times as he has mated with most of the females and stabilised his territory well.

Camp Pan Male is as solid as a rock in his behaviour and territory but he did get a run for his money when he discovered that the 3/3 Dispersal Male has decided to establish himself on the north eastern boundary of Londolozzi. Camp Pan Male was kept on his toes for more than 24 hours disputing the boundary with the youngster but it does not seem that he has lost land at all.

Manyeleti Male has also had his territory challenged by the 3/3 Dispersal Male. During a confrontation the two males did not get into physical war fare but constant territorial calling and challenging behaviour occurred. Manyeleti Male, how ever, simply went to sleep in the shade of a Marula tree leaving the younger male on edge, confused by the decision of what to do next!

3/3 Dispersal Male has decided that he is at the point in his life where he will no longer run from the established males and he has challenged both Camp Pan Male and Manyeleti Male. At the point of the confrontation (with Manyeleti Male) that Manyeleti Male went to sleep, 3/3 Male (Tlawula) approached him very carefully in a stalking posture. Manyeleti Male appeared to be unaware of the Leopard stalking him but as Tlawula Male got to within a few meters of him they both set off at high speed furiously marking territory and calling and appearing interestingly to reach an agreement of where the territorial boundary will be. This boundary seems to have been respected by both males ever since. This is very exciting as this male seems to have found his place in the world and his family lineage seems to have been found thanks to the help from rangers in the western sector of the Sabi Sands. When all the information has been confirmed we will let you know all about him!

RESEARCH NEWS

It was very exciting to have spent a day with Quinton Martins (Cape Leopard Trust), Gerrie Camacho (South African Leopard Forum) and Jonathan Swart (Sabi Sands Ecologist) while they collected genetic samples from the Leopards in the western sector of the Sabi Sands. They managed to get genetic material from 9 Leopards and it will be very interesting to see the results of which Leopards are related when they come out.

Due to the habituated behaviour of the Londolozi Leopards we will be able to help send photographs to a pelage research project based at the Chicago Field Museum in the USA. The Leopards at Londolozi are destined to help all around the world!

A few other journeys to various parts of the Sabi Sands have enabled us to fill many gaps in Leopard history already. With further help and support we will be able to gather incredible data on the entire population of the area.

The scat collection is still going strong and Londolozi has been offered the use of a microscope in the future to start analysing scats for prey. All that is left is to learn how it all works!

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



This edition's photographic competition is won by not only **Justin Turvey** who took this stunning picture of 3/4 Female and her new addition to Londolozi but to **34 Female** herself! This beautiful Leopard never ceases to amaze any one who crosses her path and through all the trials and tribulations with regards to male Leopards killing cubs, she still allows us into her world to view this little one.



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