



Thursday, May 27, 2010

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1. Shenton Safaris - Photographic Newsletter

1.1. June 2006 issue

Welcome back to the South Luangwa as Shenton Safaris sees it, this edition will be word-light and picture-heavy. Just as a good photographic newsletter should be I say! So, with no further ado...

The Luangwa - still lovely and full in early June.



Whilst all the other hippos vacated the lagoon when we arrived, this female was very reluctant to join them. Eventually her instincts got the better of her and we saw the very sweet reason for her reluctance. A teeny tiny baby hippo toddled along behind her.



There are always plenty of young hippos in the group around the hippo hide.



I took the sequence below in Leopard Loop Lagoon where this thoroughly muddy hippo became a surf board for a grey heron.





The Kaingo ebony grove is always a magical place, but I feel it's particularly beautiful in the green of the early season, shown below with an elephant wandering through its leafy shade.



Eles and hippos just down from Kaingo.



Elephant family crossing Lion Plain.



This little guy had been dawdling and was left far behind the family group as they crossed Lion Plain, the few photos below were taken as he bolted across the plain in an attempt to catch up trumpeting at them in his distress. It was quite comical really, poor little thing.





A puku mother and young approaching a herd of elephant on Lion Plain.



The group of stunning Eland mentioned in the May newsletter have been grazing in the area around Mwamba BushCamp.





The wind direction altered slightly as we were watching this young Kudu, the below photo was taken as he lifted his head from drinking to try and get a lock on our scent.



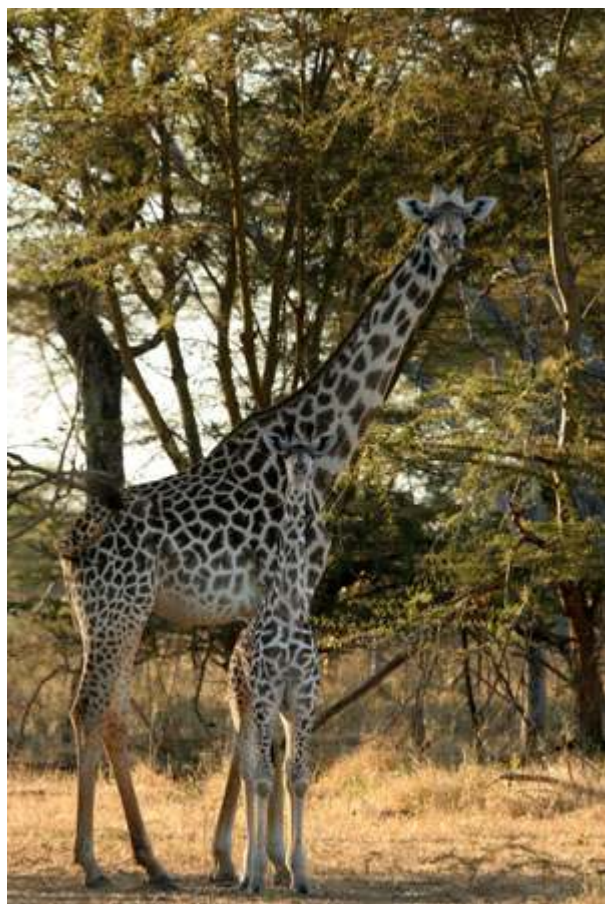
Two male Waterbuck on Lion Plain.



Leaping Impala at Mwamba BushCamp



Giraffe with juvenile on Guinea Fowl Plain





Large male Giraffe crossing Lion Plain - you can just see an elephant in the distance underneath his belly.



Zebra young suckling at the bottom end of Fish Eagle Lagoon.



Skittish Zebra at Chimbwe loop.





Buffalo on Fish Eagle Lagoon bed



Baboons playing near the kapani (small Mopane) forest.



Greater glossy blue-eared Starling



Western Banded Snake Eagle



Lillian's lovebird trio



Cheating really as I took these two photos outside the park (at our house near Mfuwe airport) - Yellow Bellied Sunbirds feeding on nectar.





The light wasn't fantastic, but I love this photo - TWO gorgeous Lilac Breasted Rollers on the roost together!



Grey Lourie (or "Go Away Bird")



White backed Vulture





Saddlebilled Stork



Spotted Dikkop (or thick-knee)



Giant Eagle Owl



And our lions - the below are the Chambowa half of the Mwamba pride.





We were all enjoying our time with the girls when we noticed this lioness had a nasty looking wound on her throat.



Amazingly she was able to get under there with her tongue to keep it clean.



I named her "Five' (the throat chakra is the fifth in the 7 system chakric energy system of the body) and left with all fingers and toes crossed for her recovery

We returned that afternoon and found her sitting away from the rest of the pride, it was clear from her movements, breathing and swallowing that she was in great discomfort.





We did not see 'Five' for a week and I waited anxiously for news from our guiding team. Finally on the 28th of June I received some news, but it was dreadfully sad news. A young lionesses carcass had been found just outside of camp on Guinea Fowl Plain. The tracks and other evidence suggested she had died in the early hours of that very day. In less than 12 hours vultures had nearly picked her carcass clean leaving only paws and her face. Finally I got my chance to stroke that silky nose and hold those beautiful big paws, although I would have dearly loved it to have been under different circumstances.



Of course we assumed the carcass was that of "Five" it wasn't until we compared photos of "Five" with the dead lioness (the nose is a particularly useful diagnostic feature) that we realised they were two separate different beasts. "Five" has been seen alive, healed and back with her pride. Who the dead lioness was and why she died remains a mystery.

The photos below are of our Lion Pride male - once part of a coalition of three he has headed up the Lion Pride (affectionately known as the Hollywood pride owing to all the hours of documentary film they've starred in) alone for the past two and a half years.





A little leopard just to remind you they are around - we see this small and very calm female up near Deb's tree on a frequent basis.



A member of the 'Green Five... (Leonotus or Lion's tail)



A member of the Ugly Five (not that I agree at all!)



And one of the poisonous Five - watch out!



As always a couple of visions of the African sky to sign off with.





The season is slipping away from me, owing to time (and the fact the Leopard Interlude was issued in July) I'll combine my July and August pics into one newsletter.

1.2. Until then

1.3. Jules

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