



Thursday, May 27, 2010

search our site...

Search

## 1. Shenton Safaris - Photographic Newsletter

### 1.1. May 2006 issue

It's wonderful to be back! And I say that in spite of a hornet attack the first day of my return...

I was blissfully wandering around Mwamba (or the empty site that is Mwamba at the beginning of the season) when Derek announced there were giraffe droppings in the citenge (our open dining room).

Normally giraffe droppings wouldn't be the cause of extreme excitement, but I never tire of observing the minimal impact Mwamba has on the wildlife and how readily they reclaim the site at the end of each season. Which is not to suggest it is not used by them during the season. The orphan elephants regularly drain our bird bath, and as the season heats up even hyena and leopard have been known to come and quench their thirst; squirrels regularly break wineglasses as they chase each other up and down the python vine that forms our bar - in spite of all the protective mechanisms we devise and implement; and the Mwamba Sands pride have a lovely time chewing our water pipe, chairs and bird books. In fact the morning of our wedding last August Derek had to race off to Mwamba to replace 10m of water pipe 'Cheeky Girl' (or so we named the playful lioness responsible for most of the damage) cut her teeth on the previous night. It was either that or no water for all our wedding guests...

Back to the hornet encounter, as I walked back up the path towards the droppings in question, the forerunner launched his attack - a huge hornet dealt me a whopping sting on the chin. As I raised my arm to shield myself the other nest protectors zoomed in and I was hit several more times. Each sting felt like 5 hot shooting needles and I swore to Derek I'd been stung at least 10 times. I was very disappointed to only find 4 welts - I felt I deserved many more sympathy inducing war wounds for all that agony.

Of course the nest has since been removed, Mwamba has been rebuilt and I haven't had a single hornet encounter since, however it was a timely (and comparatively mild) reminder to always respect the bush and its inhabitants. We really are merely privileged visitors in their very wild realm. A fact I have to remind myself of every time I struggle with the urge to reach out and stroke the silky nose of a passing lioness...

And speaking of lionesses, enough of my chat - time for some photos. We are only open the last 10 days in May. Being so very deep inside the park is an absolute blessing as it means we are far from all the other camps and can offer a very private game viewing experience, however it does mean we can't gain access by road until that time.

As you're about to see 10 days was plenty of time to capture plenty of wildlife moments and I think I've included more photos than ever before in this newsletter.

The Wild Dogs did not disappoint us this year and came visiting on our first night in the park.





1.2.



1.3.



1.4.





[CLICK HERE TO VIEW OTHER WILD DOG PICTURES TAKEN FROM KAINGO](#)

The late rains have left an abundance of water in the park, and the resultant greenery makes a stunning backdrop for wildlife photos.





1.5.



1.6.



1.7.



1.8.



1.9.



This lioness was with her sisters in the ebony grove just behind Kaingo and extremely difficult to see in the long grass. In fact it wasn't until we stopped to use the bush loo (approximately 5 metres from them) that we spotted them - just in time!





There are plenty more lion photos in this newsletter - but first some pics of our feathered friends: A Giant Eagle Owl at sunset; Doublebanded Sandgrouse; Openbilled Stork; Sacred Ibis: on the roost, preparing to fly and in flight; Egyptian Geese: flying and stretching wings; Lilac Breasted Roller on the roost and in flight; Greyhooded King Fisher; Whitefronted Bee-Eater; Paradise Whydah, Gymnogene a Yellowbilled stork fishing, and three Woollynecked Stork.



**1.10.**



1.11.



1.12.





1.13.







1.14.



1.15.



1.16.





1.17.



We found this big old male on the way into the park the day we moved back in. Whilst looking a bit battered he's still reproductively viable, there was a female nearby and it seemed they'd been mating.

On to our beautiful lions - we found the Mwamba pride on a buffalo kill just outside the camp - that's a tail the vultures are fighting over...it was later reclaimed by one of the lionesses.





1.18.



1.19.



1.20.





**1.21.**

There are plenty of water monitors in our part of the park, I caught this one on 'film' at two trees crossing...



**1.22.**



**1.23.**

This male puku found a receptive mate in his territory: pre, during and post coital pics



Eland are a bit of a rare sight for us - we do see them in Mwamba's walking area and at the end of the season (as all the inland water dries out) they sometimes come down to the river to drink, however we rarely see them in herds of more than 10. I was extremely excited to record this herd of 45 Eland. We had wonderful viewings of them for about a week. I'm afraid the light was dreadful (I had to shoot straight into the bright morning sun) and being quite shy they kept moving off when we approached, but you can see them in the pics below with Zebra and a huge bull elephant.



Below bickering Zebra, a thoroughly muddy ele and a close up of an ele at Acacia loop.



1.24.





**1.25.**

Puku young do not have a scent. Their parents leave them alone in the grass through the dangerous nights as they are safer this way. We found this pair on Lion plain very early one morning.



**1.26.**



**1.27.**

A rock python we discovered on a walk at the bottom end of Fish Eagle lagoon.



**1.28.**



When we found the Chambowa Mwamba pride just behind Kaingo they were settled right back in the thickets and lazing about as only lions know how. A few seconds of Patrick's "lioness calling cubs" impersonation (they were all relatively young) had the entire group on their feet. You can see from their expressions how confused they were - and how eager to find their Mum - they came right up to the car staring at us quizzically. A phenomenal experience and not for the faint hearted nor for those, like myself, who's hands get twitchy at the thought of silky noses!



1.29.



1.30.



1.31.



1.32.

We found them again later that afternoon, they weren't nearly so active but we spent a good hour or so with them as they lazed around in the fallen mopane forest.





1.33.





1.34.



1.35.



1.36.



1.37.



1.38.



1.39.



The sunsets are just as exquisite whether the surrounds are green or brown...



**1.40.**



**1.41.**

And so, it's time for me to get cracking on my June newsletter, plus Derek has been speaking of writing his update for at least a month. The wilds have been distracting us from the office again.

We'll be in touch soonest

**1.42. Until then**

**1.43. Jules**

Previous Issues

- [October 2005 Newsletter](#)
- [Rains 2006 Newsletter](#)
- [September 2005 Newsletter](#)
- [August 2005 Newsletter](#)
- [July 2005 Newsletter](#)
- [June 2005 Newsletter](#)
- [May 2005 Newsletter](#)

Subscribe to our newsletter!

Subscribe

Booking Enquiry

MAKE AN ENQUIRY NOW

Copyright © 2006 Shenton Safaris [✉ Tell a friend about Shenton Safaris.](#)