



Thursday, May 27, 2010

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## 1. Shenton Safaris - Photographic Newsletter

### 1.1. October 2005 issue

October is without a doubt my very favourite month of the year. Whilst Derek prefers the cooler, greener game viewing environment of May, June and July I just love the heat at the end of the season, not to mention the outrageous game viewing.

Being the last month of our season most of my office work is complete and I can spend my time out and about on safari. This, in combination with the stunning game viewing at that time of year results in a payload of great pics.

Last October was a busy time for the professionals at Kaingo and Mwamba. We began the month with a visit from David Rogers of Africa Geographic and his group of photographic enthusiasts. David runs 6 day digital photographic workshops from our camps. These workshops are always fantastic and hugely enjoyed by all participants. David is returning to host another workshop this year from the 15th till the 21st of September. A little of David's background...

*David Rogers has a background in Environmental Science and publishing having long been a regular contributor to Getaway, Africa Geographic, and for more than 10 years he has also provided work for many other leading publications locally and abroad, including Geo, the Sunday Telegraph and Conde Naste. In addition, he has authored and photographed several books. He has travelled to Zambia many times and has produced three books on the subject namely Zambia Safari in Style, Zambia Landscapes and Zambia Tapestries. For more about his work go to [www.davidrogers.co.za](http://www.davidrogers.co.za)*

**There are a few spaces left on this great trip with David so do let me know if you would be interested in receiving more information.**

In addition to David, Frans Lanting and his wife Christine Eckstrom were with us through much of October. They were busy preparing articles on the South Luangwa for National Geographic and then another on us as one of "the top camps in Zambia" for National Geographic Traveller magazine. Both articles are due out at the end of this year.

We were also visited by Mike Unwin, author of the Bradt guide to Southern African Wildlife and winner of the prestigious BBC Writer of the Year award. Mike was with us for six nights right at the end of the season and has since written three articles about us, two of which can be viewed [here](#). Mike's final article on us is pending in Travel Africa Magazine and will be out later this year.

***"One week with Shenton Safaris was a thorough immersion in the very best of South Luangwa . Expert guiding from Derek Shenton and his team brought us memorable encounters with the valley's most impressive wildlife, both on foot***

*and on wheels, whilst the laid back ambiance of the two gloriously situated camps makes them hard places to leave. The photographic hides were a revelation, a rare opportunity to sit tight and let unsuspecting wildlife come to you – plus the thrill of meeting a hundred hippos eyeball to eyeball. And all this without another camp or vehicle in sight. Magical!”* Mike Unwin.

2005 was without a doubt the year of the cats. It was almost impossible to leave camp in October without bumping into one of the lion prides or a leopard hunting or mating. In fact, in the case of Mwamba one did not even have to leave camp; the Mwamba pride took up residence at our waterhole just in front of the dining room and a mating pair of leopards settled into a big sausage tree just behind camp!

Both lion prides had several cubs which provided us with hours and hours of entertainment as they frolicked in the short grass. Anyway enough chat from me, time for some pictures...



1.2.

My first glimpse of the Lion Pride's new cubs, was this little paw sticking out of the grass. They were about 6 weeks old. As the month progressed the two new cubs became much more bold and we had plenty of wonderful visits with them.



1.3.



1.4.



I took this photo after this little male cub had tried to suckle and been denied access by the lioness. Milk bar closed!

The Lion Pride juveniles consisted of the two tiny cubs you've met above and also two 'teenage' cubs. These cubs had some magical interactions with one another providing hours of fun filled viewing. In fact famous film maker Peter Lamberti spent months last year filming this pride and these young ones in particular . We look forward to viewing the final documentary. The photos below show the four cubs together at play and at rest.



1.5.





1.6.

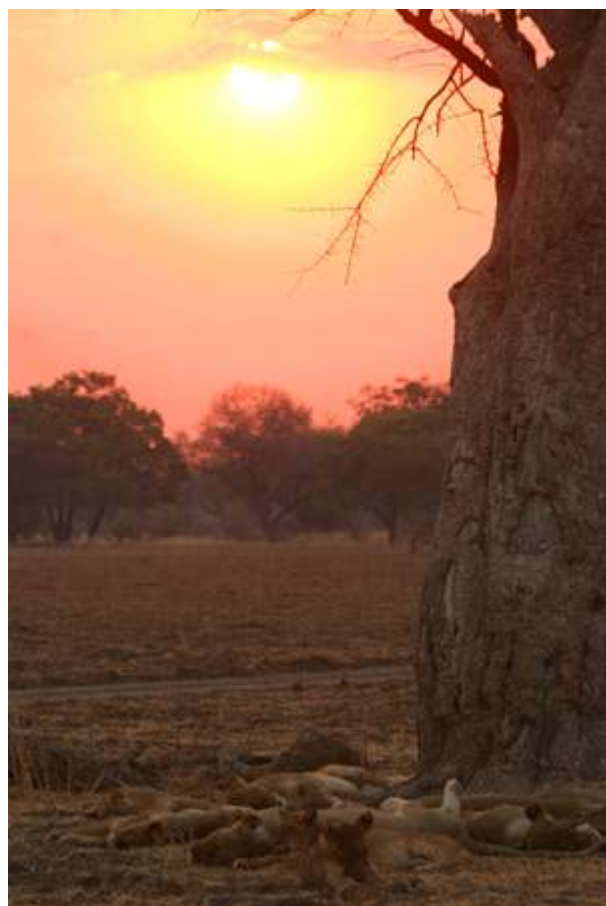


You've seen plenty of the Mwamba pride in my previous newsletters, however not wanting to neglect them entirely here are a few shots of members of this pride.





1.7.



Whilst David Rogers was here with his Geographic expedition we saw something that Derek has never seen in the 15 years he's been operating. The Nsefu pride crossed the river and moved in to the Lion Pride's territory. We watched anxiously as one of the strong Nsefu males challenged our Lion Pride male.

In 2004 the Lion Pride was run by an alliance of three brothers. When we returned to the 2005 season only one of the males was to be found. Having been head of this pride for some years, and getting on in age we worried about his ability to hold strong in the face of the invasion. It was particularly worrying as the new cubs were so vulnerable and would have been killed by any new male in order to bring the lionesses back into oestrous (mating receptivity).

Stunning as the Nsefu Pride males are (see one below) we crossed fingers and held thumbs that they would return to their own territory on the other side of the river. Instead of returning they were joined by their female contingent - five lionesses.

The Lion Pride male held his own right up until the beginning of November when we departed for the rainy season. It is now May, we have been in camp one week and whilst we've seen plenty of the

Mwamba pride we are yet to see the Lion Pride in its entirety. We are waiting with baited breath to see which of the young ones made it through the rains and whether the big man is still head of their pride lands.



Nsefu Male

And on to the beautiful spotted cats and October sightings of them - day, night, fleeting or slightly more generous I never tire of sharing time and space with these stunning and elusive cats.

Last October was spectacular for leopard, and daytime leopard sightings in particular... I have included some of these photos below.

This young female was perched high up in the branches of one of the enormous Khaya Nyasicas on the bank of the Luwi river.





The above was my last glimpse of this pretty little leopard before she jumped high up into the thick upper foliage and disappeared from view.

Derek took the photograph below of the large male leopard (who often frequents Kaingo at night) we believe is Goldie's son.

Goldie was a very special female leopard who spent much time with our guests over the first ten years of operation. Derek last saw her just prior to the rains of 2001. As he watched her struggle to get her kill up a tree he realised it was unlikely she'd make it through to the following season and said a very sad goodbye. Goldie has never been seen since.

So, this photo of Goldie's son was taken in the ebony grove one afternoon at the end of October. The baboons had been alarm calling for a good 20 minutes and upon investigating we found him high up in the branches of an ebony tree.



**1.8.**

We found the Mwamba male and his chosen partner on Derek's birthday lazing up a sausage tree just behind camp. These are of the big, beautiful male, the female was nestling higher up in the thicker foliage...





1.9.



1.10.



1.11.



Of course there are many stunning safari animals other than the cats, below are a selection of photos from the month...



**1.12.**

Pair of male Kudu in the Ebony Grove



**1.13.**

Cheeky young Vervet near Mwamba Crossing.



**1.14.**

Mother and calf in a 1000+strong herd of buffalo on Lion Plain



**1.15.**

Basking Crocs in front of Acacia Loop



**1.16.**

Ele baby between the safety of Mum's legs at two tree's crossing.



**1.17.**

10 day old Giraffe (umbilical cord still present if you look closely) being nuzzled by large male giraffe in the thickets behind Acacia Ebony Grove.



1.18.

Sunrise at the hippo hide.



1.19.

Lillian's Lovebird's drinking - a view from the honeymoon hide at Mwamba.



Large Tuskers: we found 9 bulls crossing the plain at the end of October. An unusual sight.



Kaingo's resident Pel's Fishing Owl down for a drink. An incredibly special bird - sightings of which are coveted by all birders who come to Africa.



1.20.



1.21.

Vulture flying in to a kill.



1.22.

And possibly my favourite of all, Warty Mum and Baby just behind Guinea Fowl Plain.



**1.23.**

Well, it's May and I've been in camp for a week now. Whilst we've been busy, busy opening up the camps I have managed to get out on the odd drive. You can expect some wild dog, lion and stunning birds in a couple of weeks from now in the May 2006 edition of "Office Africa". Let's see what we can do about getting a newsletter from Derek come early June or thereabouts.

**1.24. Until then**

**1.25. Jules**

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