



YOUR SPECIALISTS IN A CLOSE TO NATURE, AFRICAN WILDERNESS ADVENTURE!

UMLANI BUSHCAMP

Once again we have been having fantastic game sightings in the beautifully thick summer vegetation. 2011 started with plentiful rains which has brought out the best in the bush, with every tree species in full bloom providing perfect roosts and nesting sites for our resident and summer visiting bird species. The Nhlalalumi River was been in partial flow throughout January and February attracting many game species and thus providing us phenomenal deck viewing.



The Machaton pride are doing extremely well in raising their four 7 month old cubs, with the females being successful in making many kills. We were privileged enough to witness the adult females in full action on an unusually hot morning. The females slunk off, their attention fully focused on a small herd of impala, whilst leaving the cubs safely tucked away under a Purple pod Terminalia. After a long wait with partial views of the stalking predators, a huge commotion erupted with Impala pronking in every direction for us to discover the two females fighting over an adult impala ewe. Much to our surprise, the females were ambushed by a large male lion, which refused to share the slightest morsel with any of the cubs or the hard working females.



The pride has new additions! The third Machaton female has given birth at the Umlani bush breakfast site, but unfortunately we are not sure as to how many cubs she has as she is still waiting to introduce them to the pride. At the moment she is keeping them well hidden in an area she considers safe from other predators. She is however joining her sisters in hunts and returning to the cubs every evening.

Two very rare Reticulated Centipede Eaters were discovered during the day in the Umlani boma. It is unusual to see these snakes especially during the day, as they are nocturnal only coming out in search of prey. The rangers and trackers were put to the test in identifying the species and concluded the reason for them moving out of safety was due to the rains.



Xinopi our resident male leopard has been seen almost every day over the last two months within the Nhlralumi River. Audio of him vocalising ripples up the riverbed and may be heard on still, cloudy evenings from camp.



The pack of wild dogs has frequently been seen moving through the area with great photographic opportunities of both adults and pups. They have spent a fair amount of time within a small area focusing on abandoned termite mounds and it was believed that they may have been looking for a den site, which is extremely early as they only mate in early winter, giving birth two months later when the bush is thin, thus making it easier for them to hunt and provide for the pups.



Elephants, the gentle giant beasts of the African plains have been frequenting the Umlani waterhole in front of the lodge, hosing themselves down to cool off on hot days and sometimes spending the entire day just drinking and feeding within the area. They have also been up to no good with big bulls pushing over the camp fence only to rip up the water pipes for a fresh mouth watering drink, whilst the rest of the herd ambled down to the pool for a fun filled evening of water splashing and playing, much to the delight of guests staying in room four!



General game has been phenomenal for this year with plentiful numbers of buffalo, impala, wildebeest, zebra and giraffe, providing daily entertainment and hours of magnificent viewing.



Unfortunately we have had to say good-bye to Kyle and Louise, who have left us to go get married later this year. They will be missed by the entire Umlani team and wish them luck with all their future endeavours.



We have also had to say good-bye to one of our rangers Jimmy, who has chosen to further his studies.



All nature is but art unknown to thee - **Alexander Pope**

Sophia Lehr & Jono Hammill
Umlani Bushcamp
Jan-Feb 2011

