Singita



WILDLIFE REPORT
SINGITA GRUMETI TANZANIA
For the month of April, Two Thousand and Twenty-Three

Temperature	
Average minimum:	19°C (66.2˚F)
Average maximum:	28°C (82.4˚F)
Minimum recorded:	18°C (64.4˚F)
Maximum recorded:	29°C (84.2˚F)

Rainfall Recorded	
Faru Faru	96.3 mm
Sabora	57 mm
Sasakwa	106.2 mm

Sunrise & Sunset	
Sunrise	06:42
Sunset	06:49

April has been a month of mostly crisp mornings followed by afternoon showers. Sometimes big thunder and lightning storms and other times soft, soaking rain. The grass is long with green bases and golden blades fighting for space and light. When the wind blows over the larger grass plains, it looks like water, as the grass blades bend and reflect the light. Damp cats snooze in the waves of grass, warming up in the morning light, and elephants trample long wakes through the grass – mothers leading the way and the smaller calves following at their heels. Frogs call from all the little ponds and streams, and some of the birds are still nesting and busying themselves with the necessary daily chores of life.

A sightings snapshot for April follows:

Lions:

- The Butamtam Pride new males continued to be seen along Chui Link, Koroya Hill and Pundamilia areas, and their main meals were buffalos. Interesting to note that the coalition of six are not often seen together these days – could they split into two smaller coalitions in time?
- Nyasirori Pride members were seen often at the Nyasirori high ground near the Serengeti National Park boundary spending time on either side of the boundary.
- There have been audios of Butamtam Pride members along Sasakwa Hill and along Kombre Drainage during the night.
- Two young lions have been seen for quite a long time, spending their time at the beginning of Raho Drainage.

Leopards:
- We had some good male leopard sightings this month and our guests had amazing viewing.
- Mbogo Drainage male was seen along Mbogo Drainage and Rhino Rocks area and he is in good shape.
- A very big but shy male was seen with a large African rock python kill draped in a tree, and he would run down the tree every time he heard a vehicle.
- There was a new and very relaxed male sighted this month along Hyena Den Road and we think he came from the Serengeti National Park.
- Another leopard was seen often east of Koroya Hill, along Sand Road and watershed area. He was also relaxed, and he has a unique patch behind the shoulder.
- A female and her two cubs have moved from Rubana River and have established their new territory in between Dik Dik Ridge and the rhino sanctuary.

Cheetahs:
- The mother and four cubs continued to be seen at the Nyasirori high ground and they are all in a very good condition. Having four cubs she is forced to hunt every day and their main prey is Thomson's gazelles.
- The Sasakwa veteran male was also seen on numerous occasions hunting at the central part of Sasakwa plain. We saw him walk from one bush to another searching for reedbuck and warthog piglets. The grass being long, he was seen often sitting or lying up on top of termite mounds to get a better view of prey and enemies like lions. Towards the end of the month, he was seen limping (front left leg) and looking quite thin. We are watching to see how his recovery goes.

Elephants:
- Great elephant sightings this month across the reserve. While the grass is long in most areas of the reserve the elephants are concentrated feeding on it.
- Large herds of elephants were seen on the slopes of Bangwesi Hill and along Grumeti River.
- Faru Faru areas were great for elephants most afternoons as they paid a visit to drink at the waterhole in front of the lodge and in the river as well.
- A big herd spent a few nights on Sasakwa Hill mid-month, and then again at the end of the month.

Buffalos:
- Large herds of hundreds of buffalos were seen in many areas of the concession mowing the grassy plains. Herds are looking strong and healthy – they are a formidable force for the lions to tackle.

Rhinos:
- All rhinos are doing well. There have been some lovely sightings of Eric the black rhino on the eastern side of the boma. Laikipia was also seen from Serengeti House, which was a bonus.

A bush story follows, as well as the April Gallery of images.

African rock python killed by a leopard **By Adas Shamboko**

It was a night to remember at Sabora Tented Camp in April 2023. Guests and I set out for our afternoon drive at 15:00, eager to explore the African wilderness in search of the elusive leopard. Our first day had been unsuccessful, and we were hoping for more luck this time around.

As we drove through the plains, scanning the trees and bushes for any sign of movement, we suddenly spotted a male leopard lounging on a branch. I quickly shut off the vehicle as not to disturb the magnificent creature but, to our surprise, the leopard leapt down from the tree and disappeared into a nearby gully and long grass.

Curious to see what had spooked the leopard, I pulled out my binoculars and scanned the branches. That's when I noticed something strange - an African rock python coiled around a branch, its tail hanging limply. It was an unusual sight, and my guests were sceptical when I pointed it out to them. But as we approached closer, we realized that the python was dead, its head missing - likely devoured by the leopard earlier in the day.

We decided to move away from the kill and wait for the leopard to return. And return it did, eyeing us from a distance before cautiously approaching the snake. We watched in awe as the big cat feasted on its prey, tearing into the flesh with razor-sharp teeth.

As we drove back to the camp, our heads spinning with excitement, I couldn't help but marvel at the raw power and beauty of the African wilderness. And with a stunning photo of the python captured by our guest this was a night that would stay with us forever.



African Rock python kill in a sausage tree. Picture by guest Emilia Ralf.

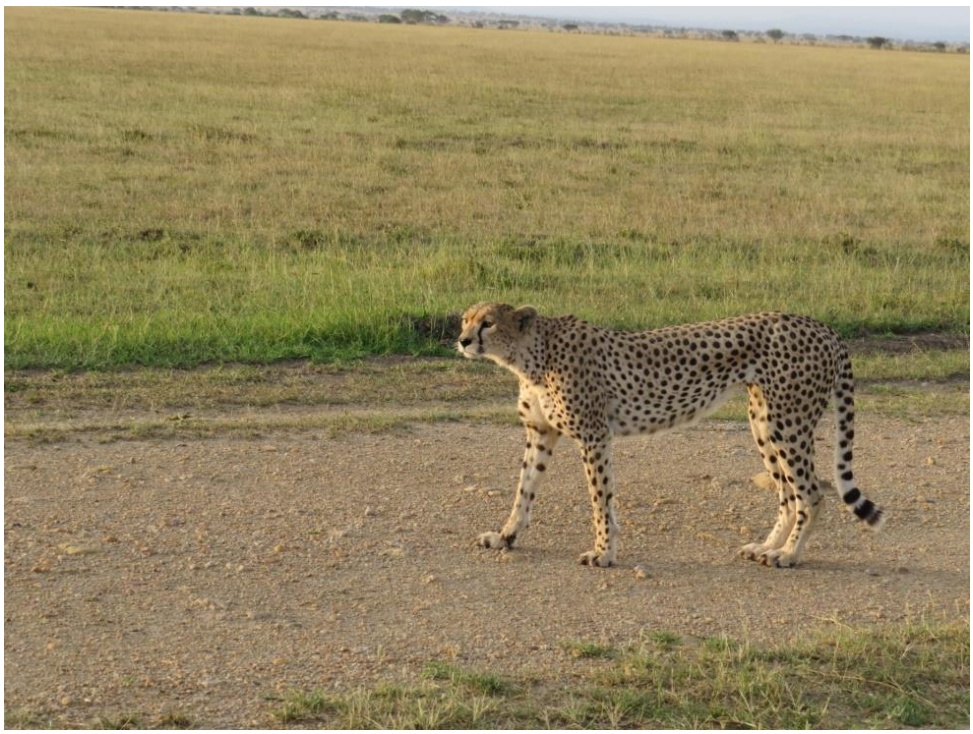
April Gallery



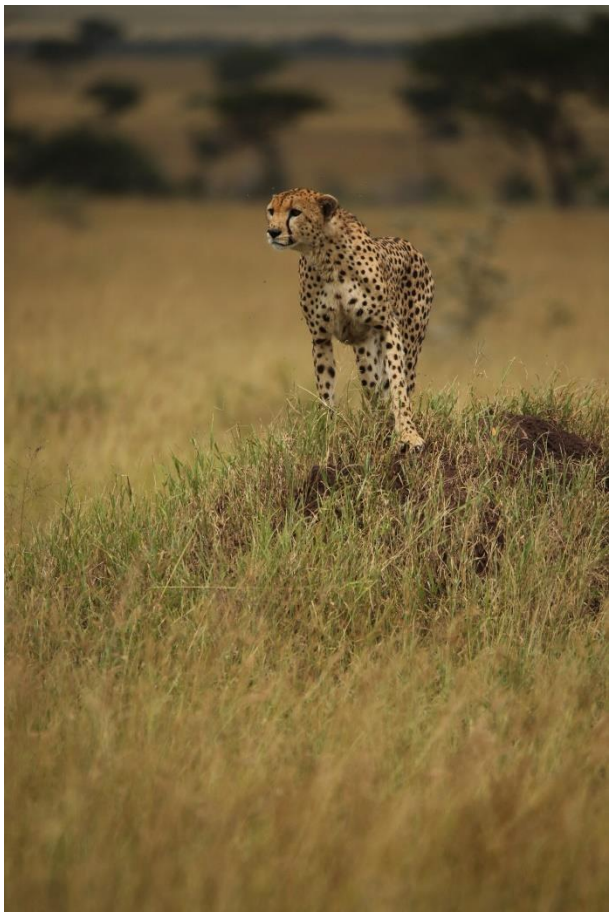
Mbogo drainage male looking for warthogs. Pictured by Paulo.



Mother and four, with a Thomson gazelle kill. Picture by Bernard Hosea.



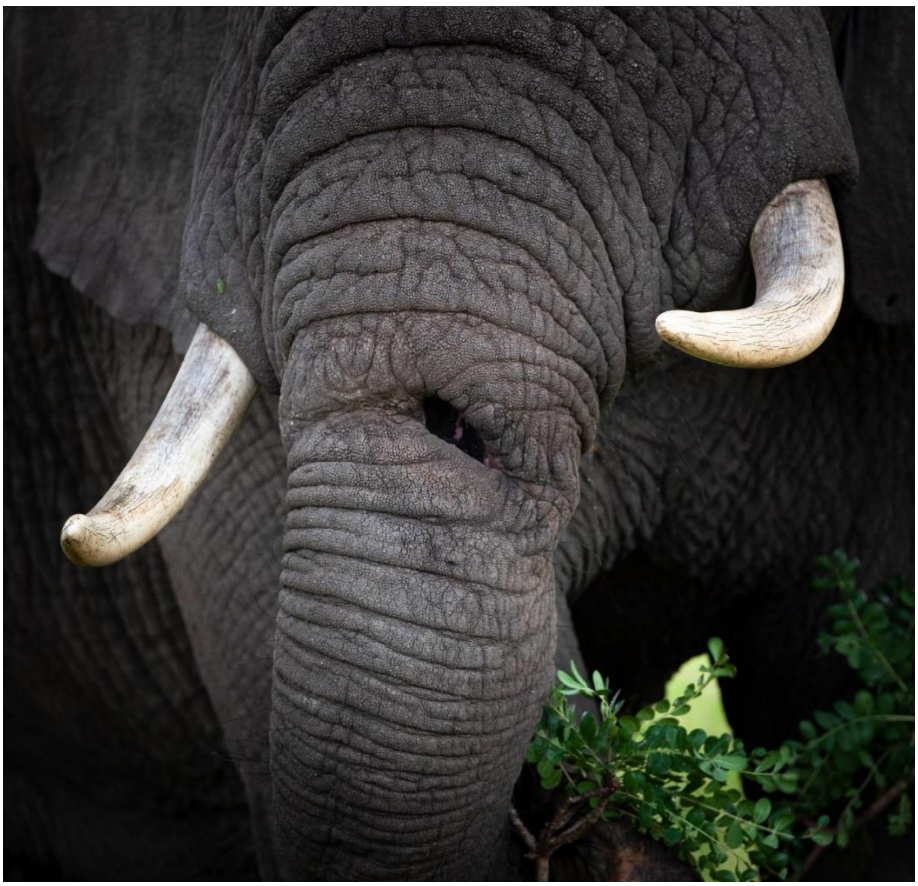
Mother of the four cubs scanning for prey to feed her cubs along the Nyasirori Boundary Road. Take note of the short grass in this area that attracts the smaller gazelles and is what this cheetah has been focusing on of late. Picture by Edward Kaaya.



The dominant male cheetah scanning for prey from a termite mound.
Notice how he was avoiding putting weight on his front left leg. Picture Grant Telfer.



A breeding herd walking running to join another herd on the Sasakwa plain.
Picture by Edward Kaaya.



Big elephant bull with old scars from a snare. A reminder of how important our work and presence on the ground in Grumeti is, to the future of these animals. Picture by Calson Luka..



Four out of the six new males in the coalition that seems to be taking over Butamtam Pride. Picture by Calson Luka.



One of the Mkuyu pride on the view point looking for other members of the pride. Pictured by Edward Kaaya.



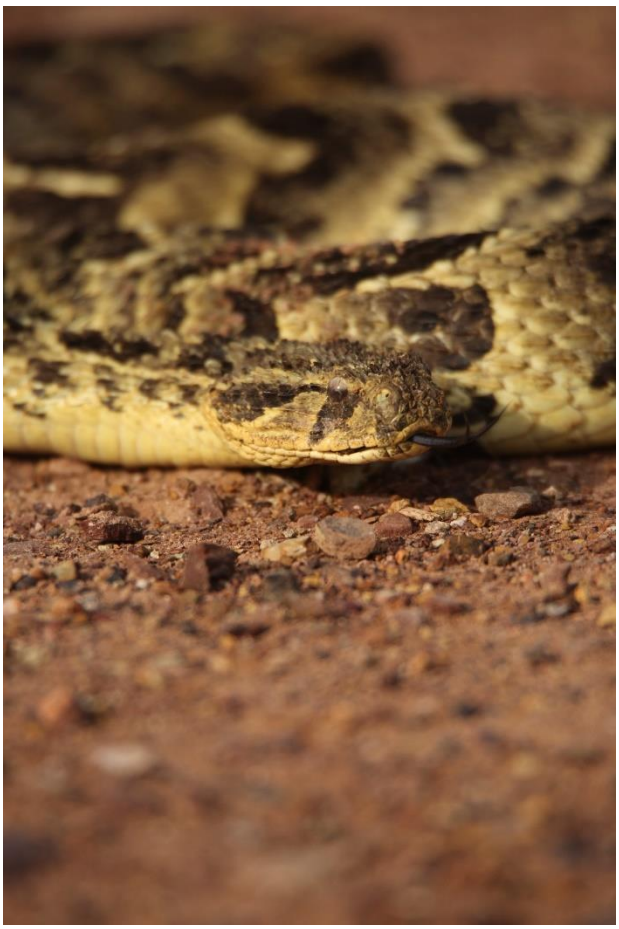
Beautiful patterns on this female giraffe, accompanied by an oxpecker on her shoulder.
Pictured by Andrew Kavenga.



Eric the black rhino with two yellow-billed oxpeckers as company.
Picture by Andrew Kavenga.



Dark chanting goshawk. Picture by Edward Kaaya.



Puffadder that was about a metre long. Picture by Grant Telfer.



An uncommon visitor at Sasakwa Dam – Pink-backed pelican. Picture by Grant Telfer.



April afternoon skies. Picture by Grant Telfer.

Report compiled by Edward Kaaya and Grant Telfer.