



The Bush Telegraph

Volume 38: Jul - Sep 2019

*"We don't own the planet Earth, we belong to it,
and we must share it with our wildlife" – Steve Irvin*

Bush greetings in our spring season!

As reported in our last newsletter, July & Aug were also incredibly warm months, seeing in the end of our winter. Our spring month, September, temperatures escalated right up to mid-to-late thirties on most days. As to be expected, the bush is incredibly dry, but there are still well vegetated grass areas. Tree vegetation is extremely limited now. The Olifants River continued to flow strongly throughout the end of winter but towards end Sept, it was starting to drop quickly. The Nzumba, Dundee & Wild Dog dams are busy hubs for much sought-after water. Due to the high temperatures & dry conditions, the impala lilies were particularly spectacular this year, as their perfect time to bring some colour to the winter bush is in these conditions.

We had a splash of rain Sept, but this didn't cause any grown spurts.

Photo – sunset on the Olifants: Simon Rosholt



Rainfall figures (mm)	Jul	Aug	Sep
2017: Kitara	2	0	0
Nzumba	0	0	0
2018: Kitara	2	0	0
Nzumba	1	0	0
2019: Kitara	0	0	4
Nzumba	0	0	3.5

GENERAL GAME SIGHTINGS

Photo: Peter Muller



Photo: Frikkie



Photo: Bob Reeve

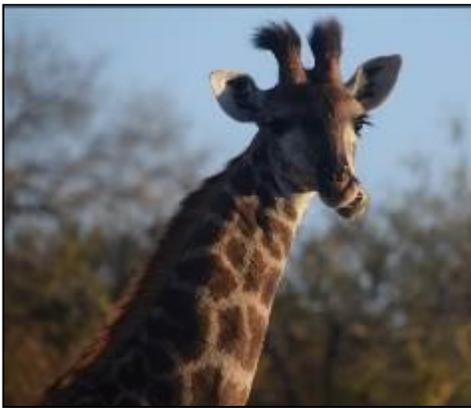


Photo: Bumper Graham

Our general game sightings throughout the past three months have been excellent. Despite the bush drying out, they remain in good condition. But with food becoming less available & less nutritional, we are seeing wildlife moving into camps for some nutrition. Our beautiful lawns are under scrub-hare attack – this is a first! Warthogs are regular visitors at Nyeleti and Kitara. Three beautiful Nyala bulls have made their home in Nyeleti, with the one bull (as per Peter's photo above) is incredibly relaxed around humans. Kitara has a resident male bush buck who is shy. Our mom & dad klipspringers have kicked out their youngster, hopefully we will see their latest baby soon.

BIRDING

Photo: Brian Painter



Photo: Ivor Crabbia



Photo: Simon Rosholt



Some excellent sightings reported of raptors & owls, as well as general birding. Even though the migratory birds only start returning in October, we have a vast array of beautiful resident birdlife through our winter months. Kitara still has resident owlets in the main complex & because of the lack of foliage, are clearly visible.

BIG GAME SIGHTINGS



Photo: Bob Reeve

With less food available as we moved through winter, the big herds of buffalo moved out of the area.

Sightings of the big herds reduced, a large herd of approx. 50 were seen in early August & middle September.

The rest of the sightings were dagga boys. There was a definite increase in dagga boys sightings in September, compared to July.



Photo: Bumper Graham

We have no shortage of special elephant sightings throughout our & properties. Largest herd being 50 strong. Naturally, the waterholes are ever popular. We have also had great sightings of elephant digging for water in front of Kitara, where the water level is just below the surface



Photo: Bob Reeve



Photo: Brian Painter



Photo: Ivor Crabbia



Photo: Simon Rosholt

This last quarter has seen incredible hyena sightings throughout our properties.

In Aug, Frikkie had sightings from a den site on the Zeekoiegat cutline.

In Sept, we discovered a den site on the neighbouring Thompsons property, with tiny pups (as per Brian Painter's photo, guided by Stefan).

Sept also included 9 hyena on a kill seen by Frikkie.

The definite increase in the hyena population is, we believe, affecting the lion becoming resident in the area again.



Photo: Ivor Crabbia

A fascinating interaction between a pack of wild dog & a clan of hyena at Wild Dog Dam: The wild dogs decided to start harassing the hyena who happened to be in the same area, they were relentless in their aggravation by nipping at the hyena.

This pack of dogs don't learn their lesson as there is one dog (now named Stompie) in the pack who actually lost half of his tail to an hyena in the same type of interaction a little while ago.

An awesome sighting for all our guests



Photo: Bumper Graham

We have had 11 different wild dog sightings in the last quarter.

With majority of sightings being around Thompsons/Kitara/Timbila/Wild Dog Dam areas, there have also been some sightings at Nzumba waterhole, Nkwazi drive & Giraffe road.

At the end of Sept, Frikkie had 7 dogs on an impala kill. All the sightings have been good quality.



Photo: Lee-Anne (left & right)
Photo: Bob Reeve (below)

As reported in our previous newsletter, the KPNR has implemented the policy of dehorning our rhino. This is ongoing due to the movement of the animals across boundaries with no fences.

In July, Bob & Lin Reeve, who sponsored a few rhino notchings years ago, sponsored the dehorning of two more rhino. This was an incredibly moving & humbling experience, but we were so thankful for the

professionalism of particularly the vets, the KPNR Team: Colin, Riaan, Willem & their team, who show absolute respect & passion towards these beautiful creatures. Thank you, Bob & Lin, from all of us Klaserie Camps & KPNR for helping make a difference! The plight of our rhino is ongoing, every small part makes a difference.





Both photos: Bumper Graham

This quarter has seen a decline in lion sightings, with 15 sightings compared to 25 last quarter. They continue to keep us on our toes with following fresh tracks, so they are definitely in the area. The make up of the sightings are all different lion; with some sights just females, then 2 males, then a pride of 9 with 2 males, 5 females & 2 sub-adults. The areas of sightings are Thompsons, Nkwazi, Dundee, Segologolo, Timbila, Bernitz crossing & Makumu/Bach cutline



Photo: Stefan



Photo: Frikkie

Our leopard sightings have been good in the last quarter, with a recorded 34 sightings. Our resident little female that has part of her territory in Kitara & Nyeleti remains a frequent visitor at both sites & is becoming more & more undisturbed by human interruption. Stefan & Don have both walked into her on different occasions in the *main complex* at Kitara (when there have been no guests) & she shows no aggression. She is also seen often walking through or close to Nyeleti. Interestingly enough, she is more comfortable with human interaction on foot than on vehicles, she hisses & shows aggression when approached by a vehicle. She is small & not a confident hunter yet. The sightings have been made up of females, a young male, a large female, a large male, a female with 2 cubs, male cub on a kill, female on a kill – majority of the kills with the iconic leopard-up-a-tree visual. Sightings have been around Nzumba, Segologolo, Nyeleti, Tlmbila, Kitara, Nkwazi, Thompsons, Bernitz. No sightings reported on Olifants property.



Photo: Claire Gunn
(left)

Photo: Stefan
(right)



We are pleased to announce that Kitara & The Last Word intimate hotels have teamed up, which has seen the revamping & pampering of Kitara, taking it to a level of understated luxury with the same attention to detail, ensuring a personalised & memorable stay.

This exciting journey will launch as The Last Word Kitara on 1st Nov 2019, where our mission statement remains: *Arrive as a guest & leave as a friend!*

Don & Lee-Anne remain the general managers & Stefan the camp manager on the ground, with our same dedicated team.

<https://www.thelastword.co.za/kitara>

GUESTBOOK PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE!!!

Please check out our website www.klaseriecamps.com
Please write in our on-line guest book, your feedback is much appreciated!



For those of you who would like regular updates on exciting happenings and aren't already on our Facebook, please "like" our Klaserie Camps page. We look forward to seeing you there!



We are on Instagram, so for all the Instagramers out there, please follow us and keep up to date on the wonderful photos we share: klaseriecamps

Photos:

Thank you, Stefan, Frikkie, Ivor Crabbia, Simon Rosholt, Bumper Graham, Brian Painter, Peter Muller – for sharing your photos with us, much appreciated!

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