

MAKUTSI SAFARI SPRINGS



Below is a shot of our local Police force, in a more colorful uniform. We sponsored the Police soccer team with uniforms (shirts, shorts, socks & shoes) for the regional Police soccer competition, and we are happy to report that they are top of their league. Well done Gravelotte Police!



Organic Mangos in erosion area



May 2011

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Mangos, mangos, mangos!

With the success of our two organic vegetable gardens, and a favourite fruit at breakfast time, we have decided to give organic mangos a go! Last year the few mango trees we have in the veggie garden produced a small amount of fruit, but we want Mangos from December to April.

In 2009 we started a more serious mango plantation with over 400 trees and 4 different mango varieties. These trees have been planted strategically in drainage lines and areas that are prone to erosion, and in time they will lessen erosion of the soil.

This month the girls in the veggie garden have been busy planting seedling for the winter months. As the soil is nice and fertile after the rain and the temperature is beginning to cool down, the next few months are perfect for cultivation. So far we have planted cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, beans, beetroot, lettuce, tomato, onion and more.



Year of the Golden Orb Spider.

This has been a spectacular year for the Golden Orb spider. Not only are they all through camp, but also on game drives, which makes for a sporty drive of ducking and weaving from their silken webs.



Safari Sightings

As usually there is never a dull day on safari with the help of our Rangers who excite & educate you on everything from insects, trees, birds, mammals and more!

On Makutsi, there are several different types of game drives you can take part in during your stay:

Rhino Safari - 3 hour drive in the morning or the afternoon.

Simba Safari - 5 hour afternoon/evening drive with sundowners and nocturnal safari.

Hatari Safari - 12-hour day including a 3-hour walk in the morning, brunch & time to relax in a hammock with a good book at Hatari Bushcamp during the day, followed by 3-4 hour afternoon drive.

Of course we can't forget to mention a **game walk** - 3 hour walk where you get to experience the bushveld from totally different perspective.... On foot. Please remember that different Makutsi Packages include different Safaris.

In February we had a group of Australian travel agents who experienced a very exciting sundowner in the bush! At the end of their game drive they stopped at Lioness Dam for some snacks and drinks. Little did they know that the 3 sub-adult lions were watching them closely from the other side of the dam wall! The group quickly made it back in the jeep with a nice story to tell back at camp.

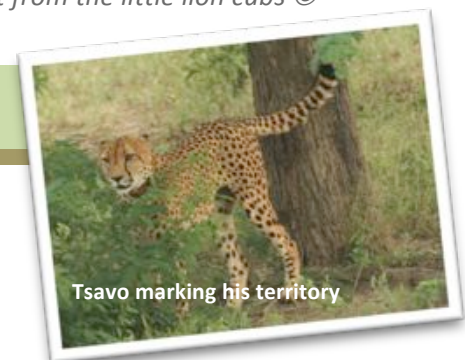
During a Simba safari with Natalie, our guests had a very intimate hour with the 4 Lion cubs as they chased a Rhino bull around. It was around dusk which added to the entertainment underneath the spotlight.

Even though this looks like play, it is an important time for the cubs to learn to hunt and pick their pray. Obviously for the Rhino it was all play, as he had nothing to worry about from the little lion cubs 😊

Farewell to Tsavo

As a Ranger on Makutsi your main role is to show clients the surrounding areas with the wildlife & nature it has to offer. Another important role is conservation. This can range from removing alien plants species, maintaining roads and erosion, to anti-poaching. Our Ranger's regularly drive the roads and walk through the bush, at different times of the day and night, looking for tracks, snares or signs of poachers.

During a recent check on our cheetah in the northern section of Makutsi, our male Tsavo was found caught in a snare that had been laid by poachers in the last few days. To find such a beautiful creature, and an endangered one on top of that, killed by a snare was a huge shock to all of us. Some of you may be aware of the increase in Rhino & mammal poaching within South Africa over the last few years, and although we have not seen any signs on our property in recent years, what happened to Tsavo was a real reminder of what can happen, and that we have to step up our anti-poaching efforts even more.



UPDATE 10 April – Tsavo left behind a memory....We are lead to believe that Arusha has a litter of cubs, which means that Tsavo lives on!

CHEETAH BOYS OFF TO THE KALAHARI

Exciting news!

For those of you that know our Cheetah research program, (Arusha & the two cubs) we have finally found a good home for our 2 year old cubs in the Kalahari.

Dr Peter Rogers and his team successfully darted both male cubs, after an hour and a half ... as usual with a little bit of excitement



In this photo are Dr Rogers and Karl Weber, along with Gus & Dylan (from Tswalu) with their new cheetah boys ready for the 15 hour journey to the Kalahari. Now these Cheetah boys can really reach their top speed with over 100,000 hectares of new land to discover! Watch out Springbok!

What track is that? *Hippo OR White Rhino?*

At some point during your safari, or walking from your bungalow to the restaurant, you might have seen a print in the dirt and thought.... is that a Leopard or Lion track?! Unless you are a ranger with lots of experience it is not easy at all... here is how I learnt the difference between a few tracks.

Lion or a Leopard?

- Lion is the largest of the African cats, their front pads are 110-130mm wide & 90-120mm long.
- **Whereas** the Leopard is similar to a Lion but has smaller pads of about 70-90mm width.
- The main difference is that the Leopard has longer and wider toes with fatter pads.

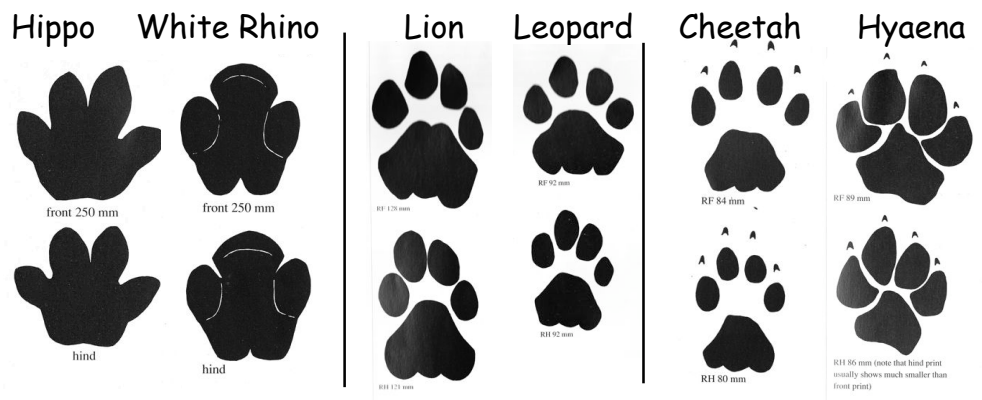
Hippo or White Rhino?

- Hippo has 4 rounded toes on each foot, the tips being encased in a horny hoof. Tracks range from 230-280mm in length.
- **Whereas** the White Rhino has 3 horny-nailed toes, the large round one in-front and the slightly smaller ones on either side. Tracks average 300mm in length.

Cheetah or Hyaena?

- Cheetah has a typical cat foot structure with 4 toes with claws. The tracks are more elongated than those of a Lion or Leopard. The front foot averages 85mm in length & 75mm in width
- **Whereas** a Spotted Hyaena tracks are more like dogs & the cheetah is more like a cat. They have larger front feet then their hind feet. Their massive 4 toe pads with claws lie in close proximity to the main pad.

The next challenge is to identify whether it was a male or female, subadult or full grown! There is something to learn every day in the bush. Good luck ☺



Kind regards from,

The Makutsi Team

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