

Singita



WILDLIFE REPORT

SINGITA GRUMETI TANZANIA

For the month of February, Two Thousand and Twenty Five

Temperature

Average minimum: 17°C (62.6°F)
Average maximum: 32°C (89.6°F)
Minimum recorded: 16°C (60.8°F)
Maximum recorded: 35°C (95.0°F)

Rainfall Recorded

Grumeti: 30.6 mm
Lamai: 18.9 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise: 06:50
Sunset: 19:00

For February the weather was very dry. The grass, once tall and lush, began to dry out and turn brown. As the grass shrank, the seeds from the plants fell to the ground, waiting for the next rains to help them germinate again. The heat during the day was intense, and the animals that required water the most gathered around the few places where they could drink. The seasonal pans that usually held water during the rains had all dried up, forcing the animals to wait patiently for their turn at the remaining waterholes.

Zebras, gazelles, elands, and topis were seen in large groups roaming the plains of Biribai, Nyasirori, and Gambaranyera, where the grass was still short and sparse. These animals fed early in the morning, when the temperatures were cooler, and rested in the afternoons to avoid the midday heat.

The dry month of February has highlighted the remarkable ability of wildlife to navigate their environment, adjusting to the shifting weather patterns and overcoming the challenges that nature presents.

February sightings snapshot for Grumeti:

Lions

In February, lion sightings were exceptional throughout the month, with some truly special moments across the reserve. Here's a summary of the highlights:

- The Kombre Pride was frequently seen near the Kombre drainage and north of the rhino boma, just east of Serengeti House.
- The Butamtam Pride covered a wide area, with sightings at Sasakwa Dam, which has traditionally been the heart of their territory, directly south of Sasakwa Lodge.
- Members of the West Pride were seen south of Marula Explore Camp and moved all the way to the border of the Serengeti National Park.
- The Sabora Pride was seen with three new young cubs near the morum pit, west of Sabora. The presence of the cubs kept the pride in the area for an extended period.
- The Ridge Pride was often seen around Sabora Access road, Mak Link, and the Ridge Hill areas, which form part of their home.
- Lastly, the Mkuyu Pride was frequently observed northwest of Faru Faru Lodge and often seen drinking from the waterhole in front lodge's deck.

Leopards

February was an outstanding month for these elusive and secretive creatures of the wild, as we set a sightings record. We surpassed the previous six month milestone, achieving something truly remarkable.

- One morning, we had the opportunity to follow a female leopard and her cub for about three hours. They led us to a Grant's gazelle carcass south of the Nyasirori ranger post.
- The Grumeti North male was often seen north and west of Faru Faru Lodge, resting in trees and appeared to be in good health.
- A large male leopard was spotted lying in the long grass along the Ikoma drainage, showing how camouflaged these creatures can be.
- We also saw a very shy female leopard along the Chui Link Road, coming from the rhino boma, and she quickly returned to the boma.
- Mother And Two was seen with one cub at the beginning of Mbogo drainage.
- One sub-adult leopard was seen along Faru Access Road practicing her hunting skills.
- Towards the end of the month, we saw a male walking out on the Sasakwa plain, straight south of Sasakwa Lodge.

Cheetahs

Cheetahs were seen more frequently in the western section of the reserve, likely due to the local movements of their prey. A few notable observations include:

- A female cheetah and her sub-adult cub were seen together at the beginning of the month south of Mbuni Crossing, near the border of the Serengeti National Park and towards the end of the month they separated and the cub was seen wandering and hunting on her own.
- Another female cheetah was observed at Gambaranyera plain, west of Balanitis Explore Camp
- A junior veteran cheetah made an exciting return to the western part of the concession, near Marula Explore, after being absent for several weeks. It was very exciting to see him back.

Elephants

In February, the large elephant herds across the reserve split into smaller and medium-sized groups due to the dry conditions in many areas.

- The Albizia woodland, located just east of Sasakwa Lodge, became a key area for the elephants, with large numbers present throughout the month.
- The Sabora area also saw a steady number of herds, often seen roaming the open plains and exploring the surrounding areas.
- On the eastern side of the reserve, elephants were often seen near the Grumeti River and Rokare drainage in the afternoons. They would drink from the river and immerse themselves in the water to cool off.

- In the Raho drainage, south of Marula, elephants were seen moving through the area, looking for seasonal pans to drink from.
- We also observed herds east of Bangwesi Hill for much of the month. These herds were moving through the woodland area grazing and browsing.

Buffalo

As always, buffalos have been roaming around in large herds in the month of February.

- A large herd were around Sasakwa plain and gathered at the dam in the afternoon to drink. Bachelor herds were spotted in the mudholes wallowing to cool off during the hot afternoon.
- Two equal-sized herds were seen north of Faru Faru Lodge. One stayed near the morum pit watering hole for most time of the month, while the other spent time at the beginning of the Mbogo drainage.
- On Sabora plain, a large herd was seen north of the camp. The herd moved across Fisi and Rubana Link and other areas towards the Seyal woodland.
- On the western side of the reserve, two large herds were seen west and north of the Balanitis and Marula Explore Camps.
- On the western side of the reserve, there was a very large herd seen on the Gambaranyera plain.
- The largest herd roamed the areas east of Serengeti House, Kombre drainage all the way to the Albizia woodland.

Rhinos

- The male eastern black rhino was seen a few times on the eastern side of the boma and he looked strong and healthy.

Some bush stories to follow, as well as our February Gallery.

Patience pays off after hyena steals meal

Story by Bernard Hosea

One beautiful morning, while I was out on a game drive, I heard a radio call from one of my colleagues. They had spotted a female leopard moving around, sniffing and calling. I rushed to the sighting, but it took me about twenty minutes to get there since I was a bit far. By the time I arrived, the leopard had already relocated her sub-adult cub, a daughter.

The two leopards continued to move through the area, with the cub happily playing, jumping, and bonding with her mother. We guessed that the mother might be leading her cub to a place where she had food hidden. Our instincts were right after following them for a while, we discovered that the mother had a hidden kill. It was a full grown Grant's gazelle lying in the tall grass, too heavy for the mother to carry up into a tree.



The cub immediately started to eat, while the mother took a break, recovering from the long journey. Later, they both rested in the shade of a tree. But soon, a large troop of baboons came by, chasing the leopards away from their resting spot and leaving the carcass unattended. The leopards didn't go far; they knew the baboons wouldn't stay long. Once the baboons left, the leopards returned to the tree and resumed their sleep, staying close to the carcass.

A few minutes later, a hyena appeared, drawn by the smell of the kill. It moved in on the kill and fed. The leopards watched the hyena eating their food, but they couldn't do much except wait for their turn. They moved in closer and managed to nibble on small pieces of meat left behind by the hyena. Once the hyena had eaten its fill, it left some leftovers behind. The mother leopard quickly dragged what was left into a nearby tree and together they shared the meal, finishing what was left by the competitive hyena.

It was an incredible sight to witness the mother and cub working together and patiently waiting for their chance to eat, despite all the challenges they faced.

A tale of survival and the harsh reality of the wild

Story by Peter Chatama

On the 20th of February, while guiding guests from Sasakwa Lodge, we made a surprising discovery. Amongst a large herd of about 200 buffalos on the Sasakwa plains, we spotted one individual that stood out. This buffalo had an unusually shrunken body, especially around its rear end. It seemed weak and in poor condition.

On the first day we found him, we noticed hyenas circling the buffalo. The hyenas tried to attack, but the buffalo was surprisingly quick and strong, defending itself fiercely. We watched as the hyenas made several attempts, but each time, the buffalo managed to escape. It was clear this buffalo still had a strong will to defend itself.

The next day, our priority was to check on him. We spent the entire day, checking both in the morning and evening, to see how he was doing. By the third day, we made a shocking discovery - the buffalo no longer had any testicles. It seemed like the hyenas had attacked him more seriously and had managed to remove them, though they hadn't been able to fully harm the buffalo.

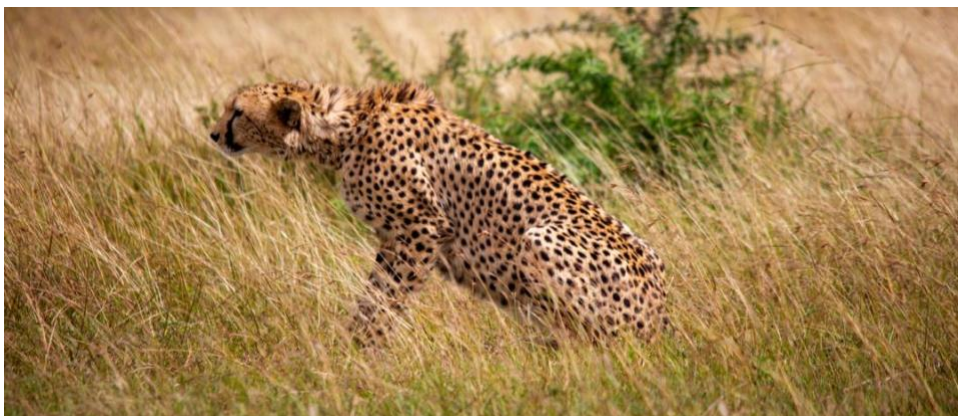
On the third day morning, we set out early to search for the buffalo again, but this time, he was nowhere to be found. We searched high and low, almost giving up hope. Then, we made an unexpected find, we saw a pride of lions in the distance. As we approached, we found there were two adult males and seven females feeding on something. When we took a closer look, we were shocked to see that it was the same buffalo we had been following for days.

The poor buffalo had managed to defend itself from hyenas but with the pride of nine lions he had no chance. Survival of the fittest is what takes place in nature.

The rise of a young huntress

By James Ikamba

For months, a mother cheetah and her daughter had been the stars of Singita Grumeti. They moved together like shadows, sleek and graceful, their bond unbreakable. The mother, wise and experienced, had taught her daughter everything, how to stalk, when to sprint, and the perfect moment to strike. But something changed this month. More and more, the mother was seen hanging back, letting her daughter take charge. The young cheetah was no longer just following, she was leading. With each hunt, she grew bolder, faster, and more skilled. It was nature's way of saying she was ready.



Then, towards the end of the month, the sightings of them together stopped. The young female was seen alone, now fully independent. Her mother had done her job, raising a strong, capable huntress who could now survive on her own. This is how cheetahs pass on their legacy. Unlike lions, which stay in prides, female cheetahs lead solitary lives, raising their cubs for about 18 months before letting them go. The mother's absence isn't abandonment, it's a sign of success. Now, the young cheetah will carve her own path, carrying forward everything her mother taught her. A new star has risen on the plains.

February Gallery



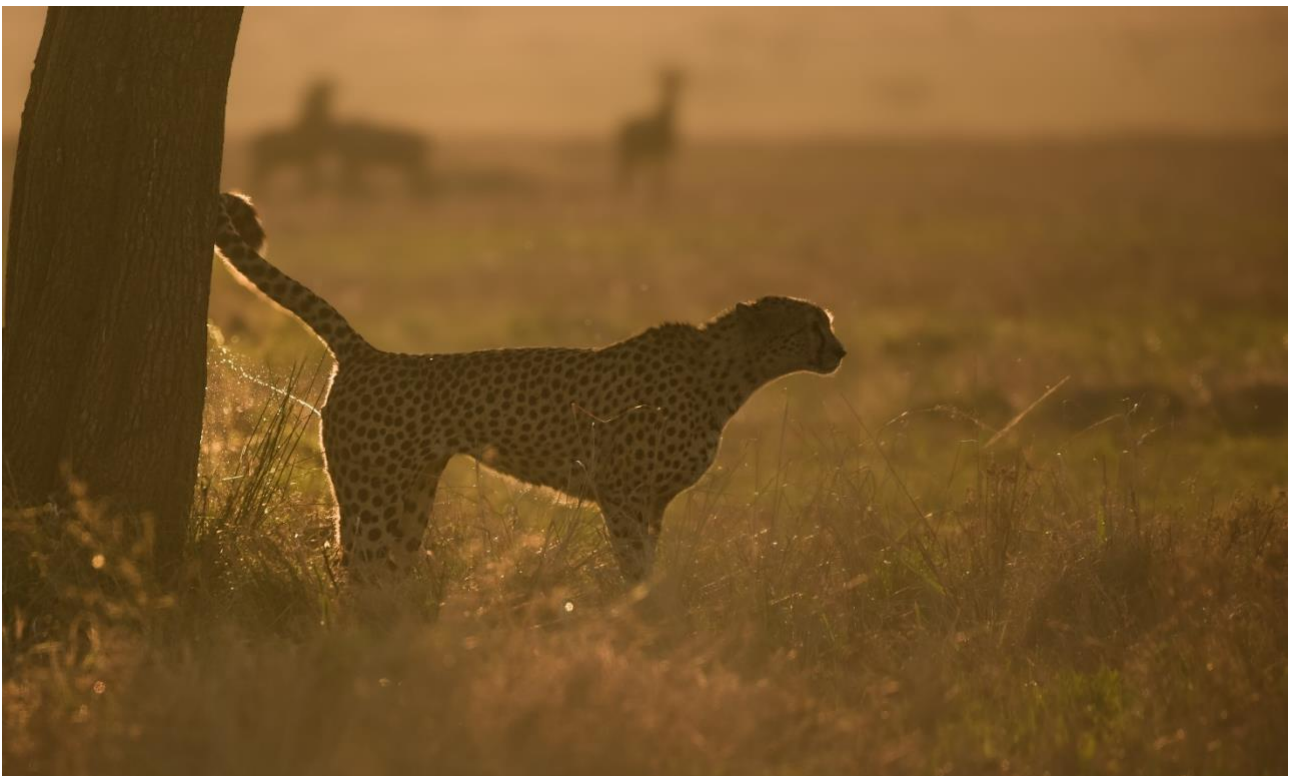
One of the Kombre male lions focussed on a potential intruder in the distance. Pictured by Clinton Kiliti



Single elephant bull cruising across the Sabora open plain. Pictured by Calson Luka



Sand beach male leopard having a full view of the surroundings, while at rest. Pictured by Paulo Kivuyo



Junior veteran cheetah captured at sunrise while marking his territory. Pictured by Paulo Kivuyo



A herd of Coke's hartebeests on the Sasakwa plain. Pictured by Clinton Kilite



A male impala keeping close to a female. Pictured by Paulo Kivuyo



Tower of 10 giraffes clustered together. Pictured by Edward Kaaya



Zebras resting in the mutual grooming position in the midday sun. Pictured by Edward Kaaya



Secretary bird on its normal routine of the day searching for food on the plains. Pictured by Calson Luka



Juvenile dark chanting goshawk perched in the tree scanning for potential prey. Pictured by Paulo Kivuyo