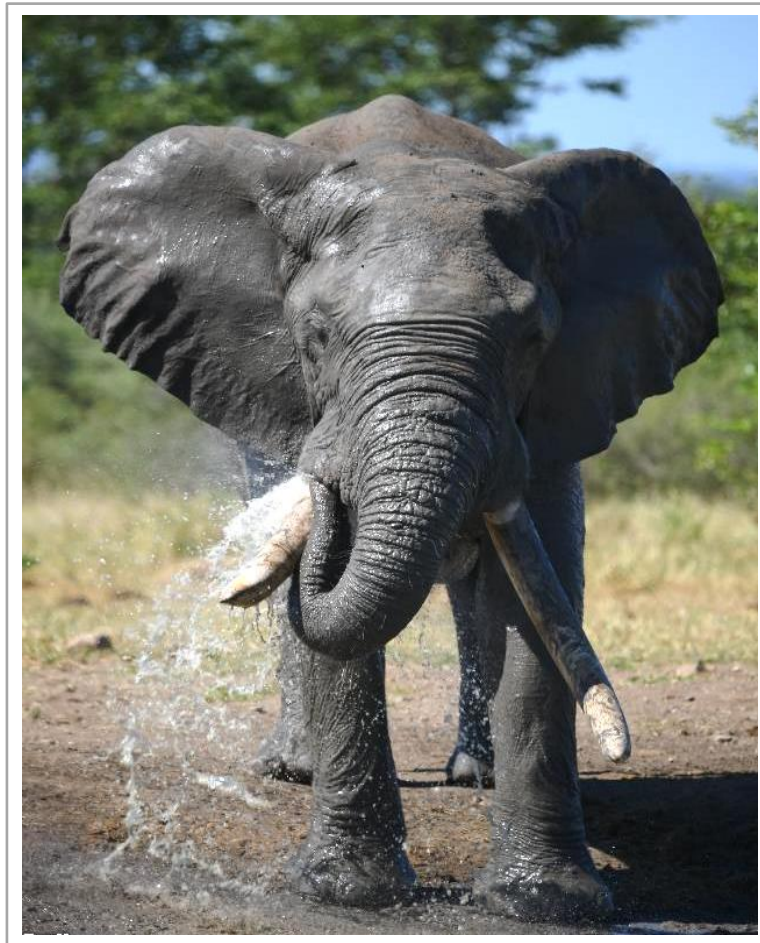


Singita



WILDLIFE JOURNAL SINGITA PAMUSHANA, ZIMBABWE For the month of April, 2026

Temperature

Average minimum: 19°C (66.2F)
Minimum recorded: 16°C (60.8F)
Average maximum: 29°C (84.2F)
Maximum recorded: 36°C (96.8F)

Rainfall Recorded

For the month: 38.5 mm
For the year to date: 620 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise: 06:10
Sunset: 17:30

The rainy season has finally come to an end, marking time when the bush begins transforming into more open landscapes. Although we received some localised showers, they won't sustain natural water points for long. Buffalo and elephants have already begun trampling the grass and breaking trees, gradually opening the terrain. Winter is on the way, and the early morning chill is already noticeable, reminding us of the seasonal shift ahead.

Here's a sightings snapshot for the month:

Lions

- A mating pair from Nduna Pride has been observed, and with gestation of approximately three months, new cubs are expected soon. Meanwhile, the rest of the pride has been ranging across both the southern and the northern areas of the reserve, resulting in more frequent and rewarding lion sightings.

Leopards

Leopards are naturally shy and elusive animals, making them difficult to locate. However, we are seeing a few individuals that are becoming increasingly habituated to our game-viewer vehicles.

- The four sightings recorded this month were truly extraordinary. None of the individuals displayed their usual shyness, instead allowing for exceptional, up-close viewing opportunities – some of the best we have experienced.

Hyenas

- Spotted hyenas were observed feeding on the carcass of a dead hippo at Croc Creek, the result of an aggressive fight with another hippo. Several vultures attempted to access the carcass, but the hyenas dominated the scene and controlled most of the feeding. The large turnout of individuals at the site is a strong indication that the reserve holds a healthy and sizeable population of spotted hyenas.

Brown hyenas

- Brown hyenas have been encountered on three separate occasions – an encouraging sign of their continued presence and movement within the reserve.

Elephants

- Herds of elephants were seen numerous times moving through the mopane woodlands, browsing steadily as they travelled. The remaining puddles of water from the late rains made it much easier to locate them during drives.

Rhinos

- The white rhino population is thriving, making sightings more frequent and easier to achieve on game drives. There is currently adequate food across the reserve to sustain them, contributing to their excellent condition and distribution.
- The more secretive black rhinos are also being seen, particularly during the early mornings and late evenings when they are most active. These sightings highlight a healthy and stable rhino presence within the reserve.

Buffalo

- Buffalo herds have been frequently observed across various areas of the reserve. Herd sizes have been impressive, with many groups exceeding 300 individuals, and the largest sighting reaching up to 800 buffalo! Their constant movement plays an important ecological role, as they trample and open dense grass areas, improving access for other species. This mobility is also a key survival strategy, helping them reduce the risk of ambush by lions.

Wild dogs

- A pack of wild dogs has been observed on three consecutive occasions in the Chikokovele area. It is believed that they may be denning nearby.

Plains game

- Impala males have already begun making their distinctive rutting calls. Some males have been chased out of breeding grounds and have formed bachelor herds. They are spending much of their time in open areas, where they often mix with zebra, wildebeest, nyala and kudu, as they share similar grazing preferences.

Rare sightings

- On an afternoon game drive, during a stop to watch a grey-headed parrot, a sudden sound came from above in the sky, followed by a loud rush of wind. Above, two bateleur eagles were locked together by their talons, tumbling through the sky in an intense aerial tussle. A third bateleur then approached at full speed, wings fully spread, and struck the pair before veering sharply upward. Moments later, the two eagles released each other, climbed high into the sky, then descended rapidly and settled on the branch of a dead tree. It was an incredible and rare display of raptor behaviour.

Photographic hide

- The photographic hide opened this month after being closed during the heavy rains. We expect the hide to become increasingly productive with thirsty visitors coming to the water source in the next few months, when most inland water sources have dried up.

Fishing

- Fishing is still great at the moment. Guests who went out managed to land huge tilapia weighing about two kilograms! However, the activity is expected to slow down as we move into the winter season.

Boat cruise

- Crocodiles, hippos, and various aquatic birds have been regularly observed during boat excursions. With the water levels still high, hippos are appearing in new areas, offering fresh and exciting sightings on every boat safari.

Rock art

- The San people have left an everlasting record of their rich lifestyle and traditions. Guests greatly appreciate the privilege of visiting these sites and gaining insight into the way life was.

Day visits to Gonarezhou National Park

- Gonarezhou National Park remains an outstanding destination for viewing large herds of elephants. The thick vegetation has not affected sightings of these giants. Both the Chivirila Falls and the iconic Chilojo Cliffs are looking spectacular. The Runde River is also flowing strongly, adding to the beauty of the landscape.

Kambako Living Museum of Bushcraft

- Visiting guests experienced a range of traditional skills and cultural practices, including water sourcing, tool making, salt extraction from the soil, and the identification of various edible tubers and fruits. These immersive demonstrations have proven to be enlightening and highly engaging for visitors.

Some Bush Stories follow, as well as the images for the April Gallery.



Owls are magnificent birds, widely regarded as symbols of wisdom. They have exceptional eyesight and excellent hearing. Their specialised wing feathers reduce the sound of their wing beats, allowing them to approach prey silently. This gives them an extremely high hunting success rate. The parts of their prey that cannot be digested are compressed into a compact pellet, which the owl later regurgitates.

In some areas, owl populations are declining because of rodent poisons, a practice that is now strongly discouraged, as the toxins move up the food chain. Owls are also surrounded by African myths, where they are often associated with witchcraft. Because of these beliefs, they are disliked by some people, especially in rural areas. If an owl sits and calls from the apex of a hut, it is considered a bad omen. At the same time, people fear harming them, believing that misfortune will follow. These beliefs usually revolve around large nocturnal owl species.

Catch and consume

By Nicholas Gaunje

We had an amazing morning game drive, where we watched the wild dogs during a hunt for an impala. From the moment they began moving in a coordinated, focused way, the atmosphere was tense and exciting. Their teamwork – quick bursts of acceleration, sudden changes in direction, and constant communication – showed how well they function as a group.

After a successful hunt, the interactions that followed were just as memorable. We observed how the pack gathered and settled into a moment of release and excitement, with individuals taking their turn and staying close to maintain order and cohesion. There was also a clear sense of social behaviour: calm, brief checking movements, small shifts in posture, and quick exchanges within the pack as they fed and regrouped.

The entire experience was unforgettable – thrilling to witness the hunt, and equally special to see the wild dogs' behaviour and dynamics immediately afterward.



Wild dogs at rest. By Daffy Marumahoko.

Twitter

By Daffy Marumahoko



Grey-headed parrot (*Poicephalus fuscicollis suahelicus*). Giant kingfisher (*Megaceryle maxima*).
Yellow-billed oxpecker (*Buphagus africanus*).





White rhino (*Ceratotherium simum*) mowing the lawn.
Cape buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*) relishing the mud.





A dainty klipspringer (*Oreotragus oreotragus*).
A colossal African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*).





Standing tall: A giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) and a sentinel baobab on the top of a sandstone ridge.

