

Singita



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

Temperature

Average minimum: 18°C (64°F)
Average maximum: 34°C (93°F)
Minimum recorded: 17°C (62°F)
Maximum recorded: 38°C (100°F)

Rainfall Recorded

Faru Faru 5 mm
Sabora 19 mm
Sasakwa 47 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise: 06:34
Sunset: 18:39

October has been a wonderful month with lots of action and fantastic wildlife numbers all over the Grumeti Reserve. Thousands of zebras continue to pass through the region alongside huge numbers of wildebeest that have been utilising the good pastures.

The Grumeti River continues to flow as a shallow clear channel, snaking its way through the riverbed beneath the towering fig trees. Consequently, we have had some fantastic walking adventures along the river under these favourable conditions. The wildlife coming to the river water during the heat of the day is magical. Elephants congregate on the sandy bars whilst spraying themselves with cooling spurts of water from their trunks. The buffalo, zebra and eland descend the banks wearily to drink as they know the lions are never too far away. Using wind, shade and good safe cover, one can hide away successfully from the approaching animals and watch quietly as they drink. A truly lovely experience for those privileged to be involved in such an activity.

The elephants on the property have been constant with many congregating along the Grumeti River. Cat sightings too have been great with numerous cheetah sighting this month.

Here's a sightings snapshot for October:

Lions:

- Core prides, such as the Butamtam and Nyasirori continue to captivate and produce wonderful interactions.
- The West Pride, close to Explore Marula have also offered great sightings on the Raho drainage.
- Lions along the river have been fantastic! As the sand banks are exposed with the dropping water levels some lovely shady sections are made available for the cats to rest in through the heat of the day. The lions also know that it will not be too long before the zebra herds return to the river again to drink. Ambushes are set between the banks and often the lions are successful in their hunting.
- The coalition of seven young male lions continue to remain together and have been sighted in the central region relatively often.

Leopards:

- Good leopard sightings this month with some lovely leopard action at both Sabora and Faru Faru.
- A relaxed male leopard was sighted on the Raho drainage, just downstream of Kigelia Crossing. This male was also sighted in the vicinity of an adult female on the drainage line earlier this month.
- The Sabora drainage male leopard continues to provide some powerful sightings, just a stone's throw from Sabora camp. This incredibly strong individual is able to run up a sausage tree easily, with a young zebra in the clamp of his mouth! Such power is pretty awe inspiring.
- There has been leopard activity around Sasakwa Hill from time to time but the animals remain shy and well hidden, and sightings are not as common.
- The Grumeti North male has been seen on a number of occasions. He is well known for lying in the cool branches of the trees on the drainage, waiting for a young wildebeest to stray close enough to launch his attack. This male leopard is wise and has patience. A lovely relaxed individual and a pleasure to spend time with.

Cheetahs:

- We have had some great interactions with the Sasakwa plains veteran male. This powerful cheetah has been hunting on the Sasakwa plains successfully, on a number of occasions.
- Two younger males have been spending some time in the block between Colobus Crossing, on the river, and Arab Camp. These two individuals are likely to be brothers and coordinate their hunts together very well. We were lucky enough to experience some of their hunting skills and techniques close to Pelican pan, as they closed in on an impala herd.
- We had reports of a female cheetah with four youngsters out in the far western plains of the Grumeti Reserve. Excellent news indeed!
- An unknown large male cheetah had also been seen in the vicinity of the Sasakwa males' territory a number of times and we are keeping a close eye on any consequent interaction.

Elephants:

- We have observed fantastic elephant viewing on the river this month from Bangwezi, Ikorongo and downstream to Colobus Crossing.
- Good breeding herds of elephants utilising the Manchira drainage this month which has been lovely to see. Very good feeding is offered on the upper reaches of this relatively secret little corner of the reserve.
- Good activity on the Mkomure drainage too this month and some great elephant bulls sighted in this location, and east towards the Amara Woodlands.

Buffalo:

- Buffalo populations are booming! This species is very successful on the grasslands of the Grumeti Reserve. It has been an incredible story of recovery as we look at a population of approximately 8 000 animals these days.

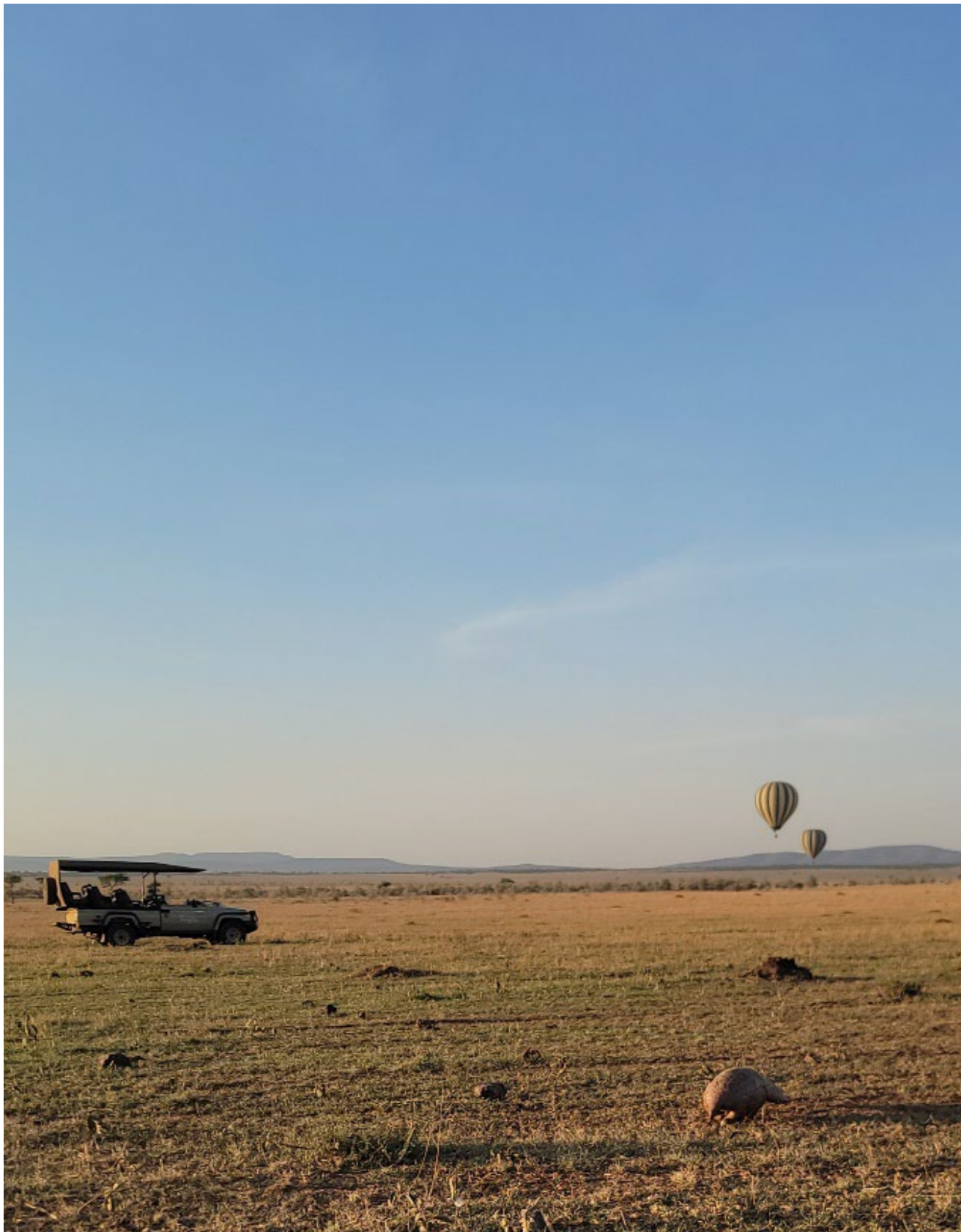
- Some of the herds are almost 1 000 strong. The breeding herds have been successful this year, rearing many calves.
- Sasakwa Hill has seen aggregations of up to 30 bull buffalo in a single bachelor herd. It is awesome spending some time observing these characters and looking at the differences between individuals from physical traits to their differences in mentality.

Rhino:

- All rhino are accounted for and in healthy condition. We continue to work closely with the TANAPA teams to ensure vital protection is in place.



A short bush story to follow as well as the October Gallery of images.



Described as the “most charismatic creatures in the African wild” is none other than a beautiful anteater with overlapping keratinized scales as a protective shield; an animal called a pangolin. Others describe it as a look-alike of an armadillo. Pangolins are notoriously shy, and their elusiveness makes them a very interesting and rare sight to see.

On an early late October morning while watching the hot air balloon rides over the Grumeti Reserves we noticed a pangolin crossing the road! We were caught by surprise since it isn't an everyday sight. We observed it and realised that it had been foraging and was most likely heading back to its burrowing hole. It was a major highlight of the day even for those that didn't witness it – just knowing that a pangolin had been spotted nearby was still very exciting.

A pangolin sighting is very important data for our conservation records. The ecology team from Grumeti Fund gathered all the necessary information about the animal and realised it was the same individual they had recorded before. It is believed to be burrowing within the area since this is a third sighting of it in two years. It is wonderful to know that pangolins live in these protected parts.



It's one of the most exciting mornings I've ever had, and the lesson learned is that they are so endangered. There are eight species of pangolins found on two continents. They range from Vulnerable to Critically Endangered. According to an article published by the World Wildlife Fund, a pangolin is being poached every three minutes. Long may this species make the well-protected Singita Grumeti their safe home.

October Gallery



A wonderful capture here from Robert Kibwana of our Sasakwa male cheetah , “The Veteran.”



A very well-rounded male lion.



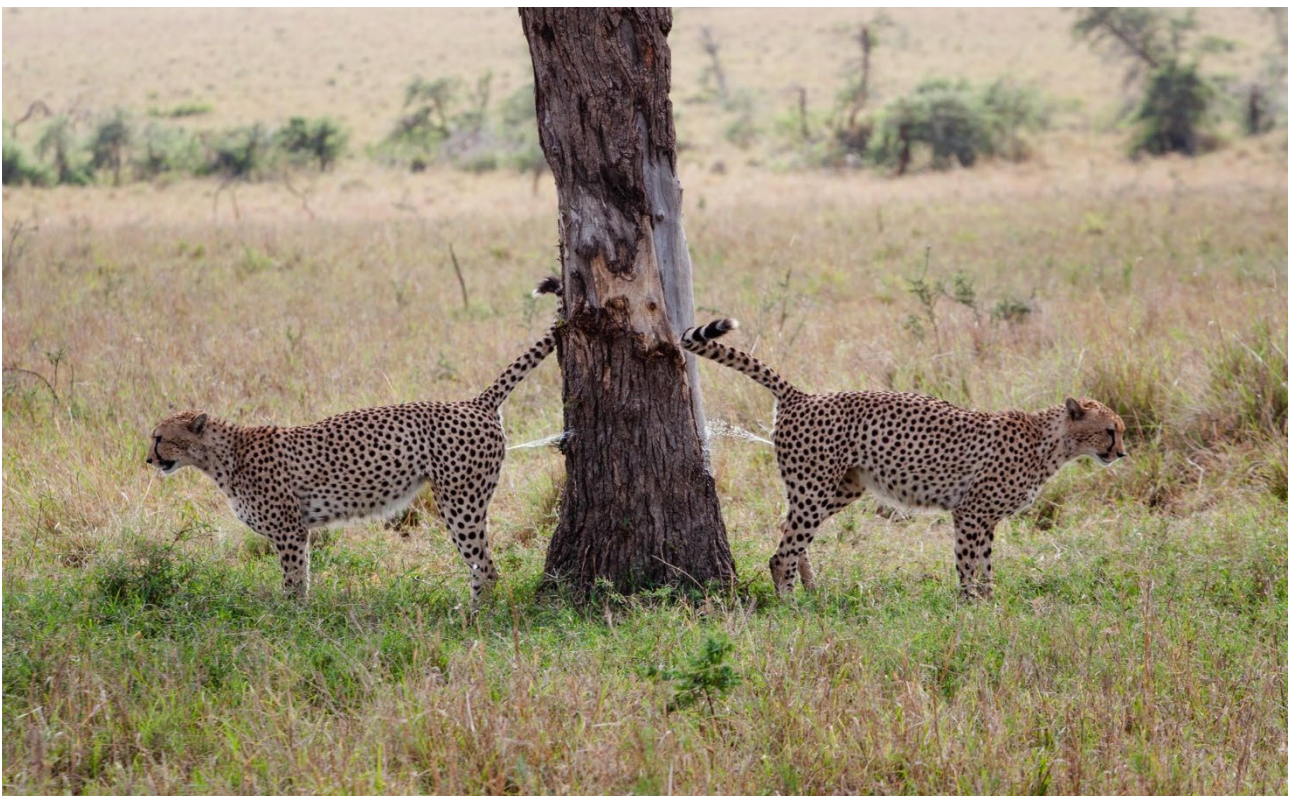
Nyasirori lionesses enjoy the warmth of the early morning sun and ponder over the hot air balloon. Picture by Calson Luka.



A mother and her youngster artfully captured by James Ikamba.



A lovely elephant photo by Calson Luka.



Two young male cheetahs scent mark together. Picture by Calson Luka.



A black rhino bull.



Beautiful colours on the central grasslands.



The awesome tawny eagle photographed here by Paulo Kivuyo.



A dramatic scene captured here by Jeremiah Morris.