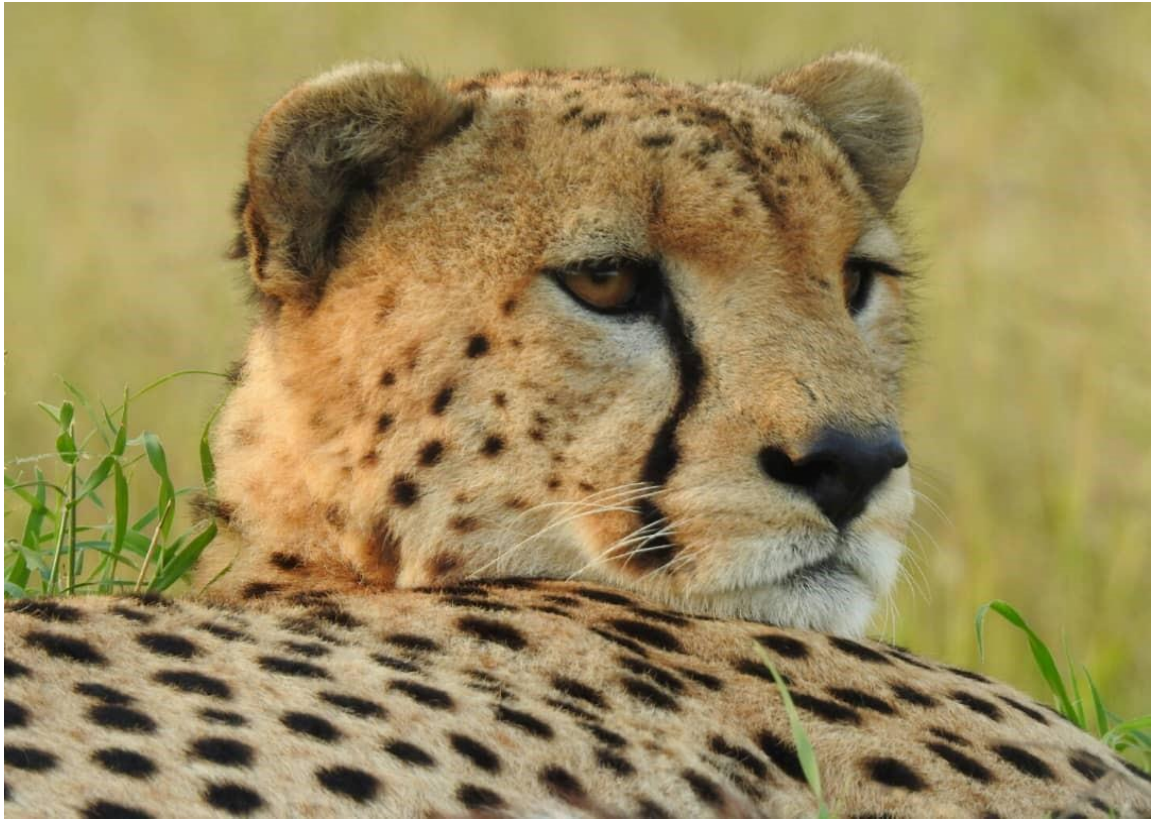


Singita



WILDLIFE REPORT SINGITA GRUMETI TANZANIA For the month of May, Two Thousand and Twenty One

Temperature

Average minimum: 21°C (69.8°F)
Average maximum: 30°C (86.0°F)
Minimum recorded: 18°C (64.4°F)
Maximum recorded: 32°C (89.6°F)

Rainfall Recorded

Faru Faru: 72 mm
Sabora: 130 mm
Sasakwa: 132 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise: 06:39
Sunset: 18:40

May has been a beautiful month here on the Singita Grumeti Reserve. There has been a reasonable amount of rain around, as you will see from the stats above, however, the colour contrasts of clouds, grasslands and wildlife has been fantastic. There are currently some truly wonderful photographic opportunities to be experienced here on the incredible East African high plateau!

The Grumeti River continues to flow with much water and the gentle currents have enticed the movements of crocodiles and hippos towards our central regions.

May 11th this year saw the return of many thousands of wildebeest, however, they just brushed by the very eastern reaches of the property and then continued off in a southerly direction. We hope that it will not be long before the central areas of the Grumeti will once again be flooded with migratory wildebeest.

Here's a sightings snapshot for May:

Lions

- Life has been tough for the lions on the Singita Grumeti reserve these last few months. With few prey species around, the big cats eagerly await the return of the migratory wildebeest and zebra.
- The Butamtam Pride has moved into new areas of the reserve for the first time in over six years. These animals have pushed into neighbouring territories in order to find prey and are currently situated on the eastern side of the German Bridge, Grumeti River. The powerful Butamtam lionesses are bringing down buffalo more and more often these days. We've had some wonderful sightings of this large pride (usually 24 members are seen together with many youngsters).
- It is great to see the Nyasirori Pride has taken up residence close to Sabora Camp once again as they hunt in the region just to the west of camp.

Leopards

- There have been some lovely leopard sightings this month.
- A mating pair have been observed on a number of occasions close to the Grumeti North Hill, just a stone's throw from Faru Faru Lodge. The animals, being incredibly relaxed, allow for some great observations with guests.
- We continue to observe good leopard activity in and around Sasakwa Hill and just a short distance away, in the Ridge Hills. Here you may find the Ridge Hill mother and cubs as she moves through the woodlands at the base of the gentle slopes.

Cheetahs

- This month we have observed some lovely cheetahs in the region.
- The awesome Sasakwa male, featured here in the opening picture, was relaxing on Koroya Hill in the central areas.
- Good cheetah activity has been observed in the western areas, as well as on the Sasakwa plains.
- The Sabora mother with two young cubs continues to do well and she continues to utilize the area close to Sabora Camp.

Elephants

- Huge numbers of elephants walk Singita Grumeti this month.
- Large aggregations of up to 200 individuals are being observed regularly out in the west and along the Grumeti River.
- We are still seeing some impressive bulls moving through the reserve making for some awesome sightings and photographic opportunities.

Hyenas

- Spotted hyena activity, as you would expect, remains high, especially in the Nyasirori region. They are keeping close eyes on potential prey species which are congregating on the Nyasirori high ground.

Buffalos

- Large herds of buffalo have been occupying the grasslands through the wet season.
- Three very large herds may be found on the Sasakwa plains alone which tells us that these animals are doing incredibly well.
- Births within the breeding herds peaked this wet season and there are many youngsters to be seen.

Rhinos

- The rhinos on the property continue to do very well. They are strong, healthy and in good shape.
- The conditions have been tough in the Ikorongo region making sightings difficult, however, there have been some lovely interactions with individuals.

Bush news follows, as well as the May Gallery of images.



I recently had an amazing sighting, with my guests, of a serval. It was relaxed about us and the vehicle, and paid us no heed. Serval are normally shy, secretive and mainly nocturnal so it was extraordinary to watch it out in the open, in broad daylight. We spotted it north of Pundamilia Hill along Old School area, and it has been seen again both south and north of Pundamilia Hill. I snapped this photo with my phone but if it continues to stay in this area perhaps our guests can get some beautiful images of this graceful sleek cat.

Here are a couple of interesting serval facts:

- The serval (*Leptailurus serval*) is native to Africa.
- The serval is a slender, medium-sized cat that stands 54–62 cm (21–24 in) at the shoulder and weighs 9–18 kg (20–40 lb). It is characterised by a small head, large ears, a golden-yellow to buff coat spotted and striped with black, and a short, black-tipped tail.
- It resembles a cheetah in its build and coat pattern, though not in size.
- Melanistic servals have been observed in the wild.
- The serval has the longest legs of any cat relative to its body size.
- The serval is a solitary carnivore and active both by day and at night.
- It preys on rodents, particularly vlei rats, small birds, frogs, insects, and reptiles, using its sense of hearing to locate prey.
- It leaps over 2 m (6 ft 7 in) above the ground to land on the prey on its forefeet, and finally kills it with a bite on the neck or the head.
- Both genders establish highly overlapping home ranges of 10 to 32 km² (4 to 12 sq mi), and mark them with faeces and saliva.
- After a gestational period of two to three months, a litter of one to four is born. The kittens are weaned at the age of one month and begin hunting on their own at six months of age. They leave their mother at the age of around 12 months.
- Agonistic behaviour involves vertical movement of the head (contrary to the horizontal movement observed in other cats), raising the hair and the tail, displaying the teeth and the white band on the ears, and yowling.
- The serval is vulnerable to hyenas and wild dogs. It will seek cover to escape their view, and, if the predator is very close, immediately flee in long leaps, changing its direction frequently and with the tail raised.
- Like many cats, the serval is able to purr; it also has a high-pitched chirp, and can hiss, cackle, growl, grunt and meow.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serval>

Birding paradise

Singita Grumeti is truly a birding paradise, and offers some very special birds endemic to the area.



The lovely East African endemic, the grey crested helmetshrike.

Picture by Godson Birdi.

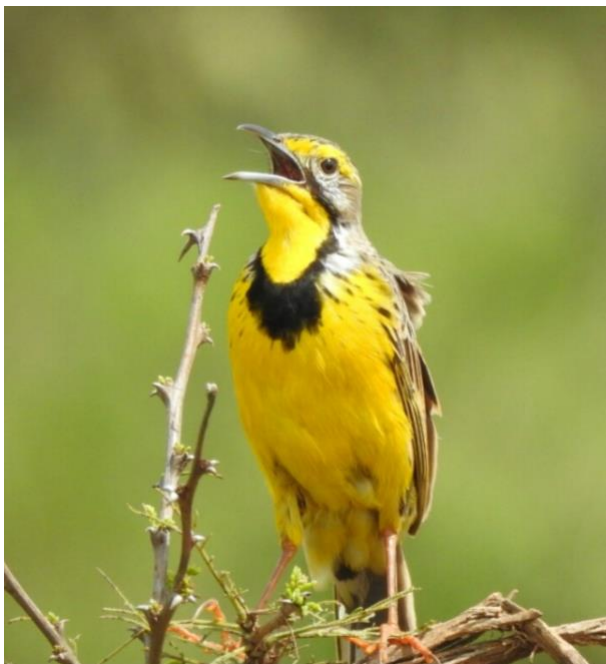


A Karamoja apalis perches up high in the white thorn woodlands. This is a very rare East African endemic.

Picture by Paulo Kivuyo.



The parasitic weaver (also known as the cuckoo finch) sighted here on the Sabora plains.

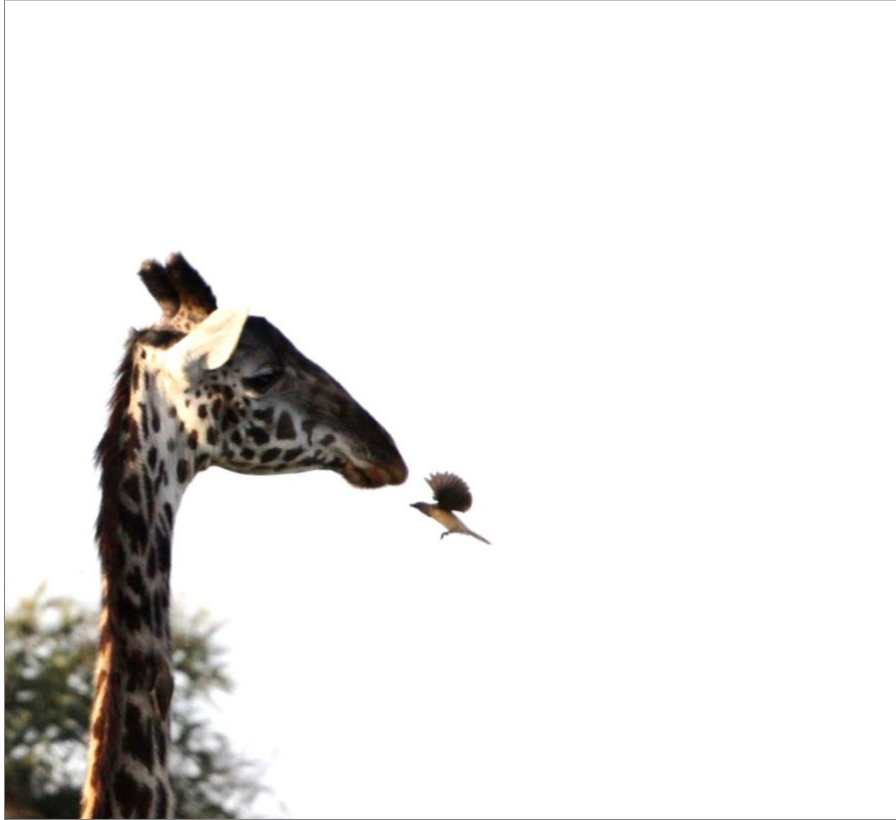


(Left) A yellow-throated longclaw sings its little heart out on the Sasakwa grasslands.

(Right) An interesting little visitor seen here on Sasakwa Hill. The miombo wren-warbler.

Pictures by Godson Birdi

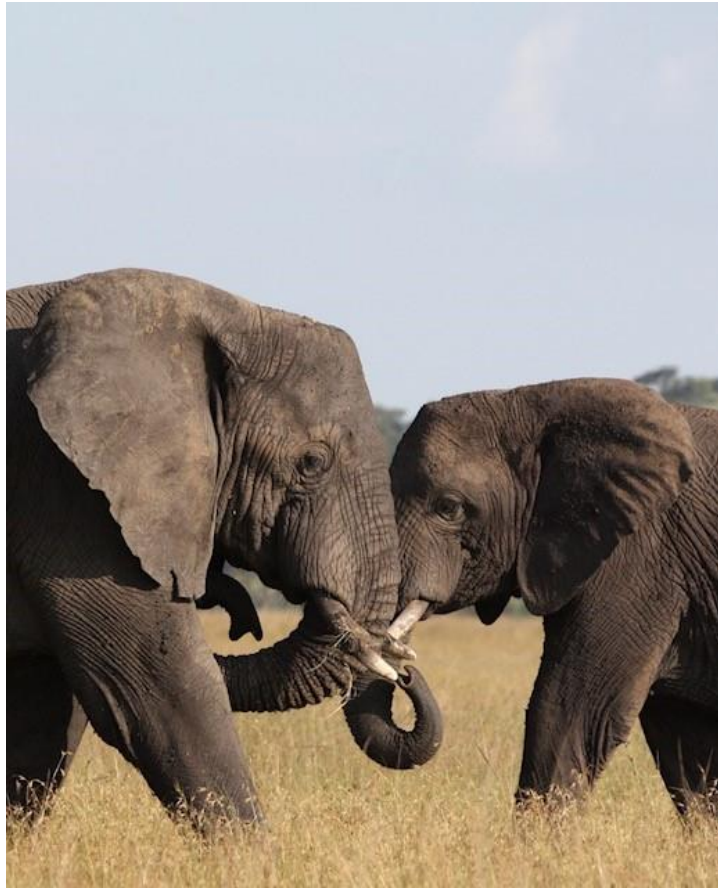
May Gallery



An oxpecker arrives at its high-rise residence for a quick feed. Picture by Calson Luka.



A cheetah scans the Sasakwa plains for prey. Picture by Calson Luka.



Elephants near the Ridge Hills.

Picture by Calson Luka.



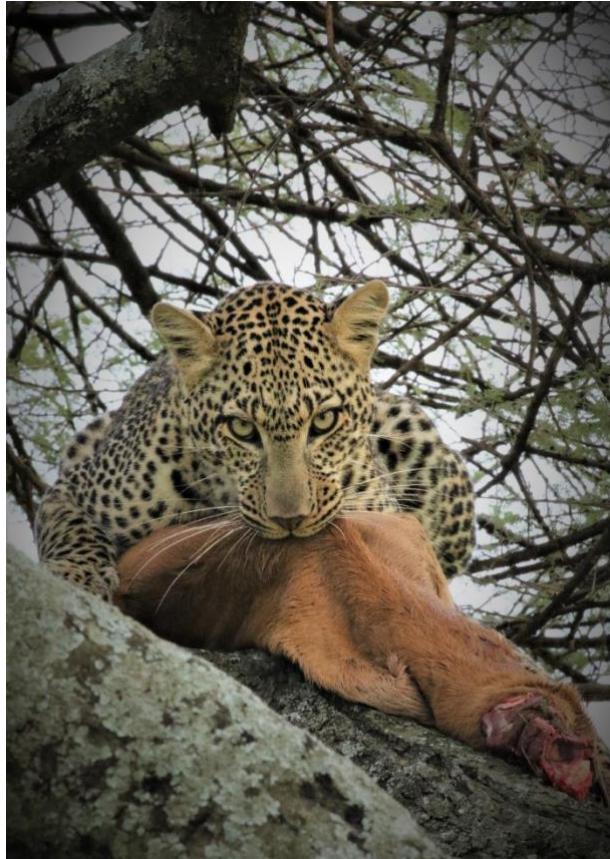
Hyena feeding upon a carcass with the balloon floating gently behind over the Sabora plains.

Picture by Calson Luka.



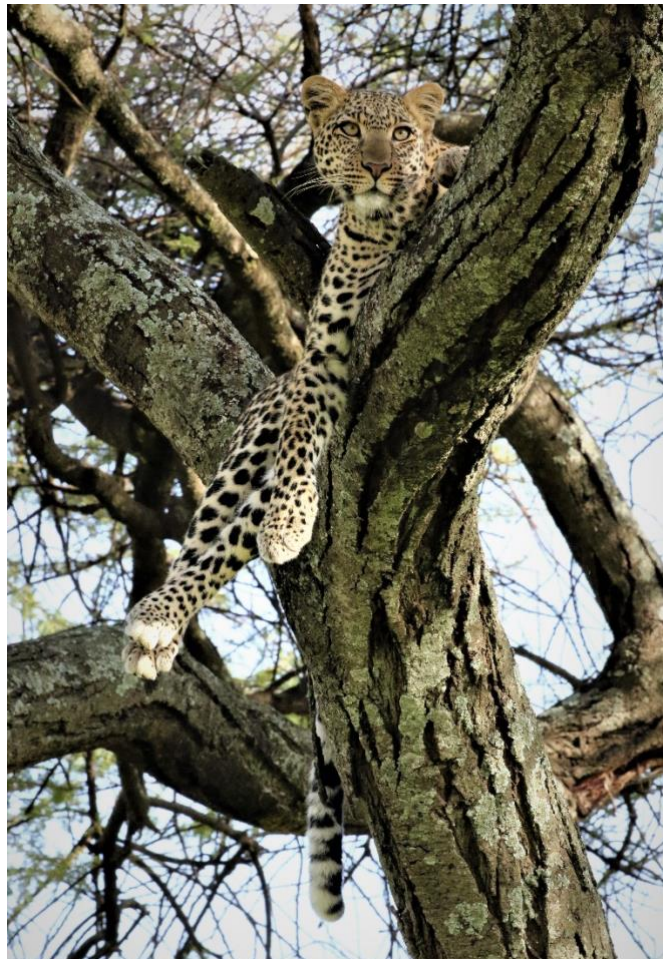
The Grumeti North female leopard and partner. Picture by Godson Birdi





The Grumeti North female's daughter of 22 months old successfully brings down an impala and moves into the safety of a thorn tree to feed.

Pictures by George Tolchard.





Butamtam Pride members on the Sasakwa plain. Picture by Calson Luka.



The Nyasirori territorial male lions moving across the high ground, close to Sabora Camp.

Pictures by Edward Kaaya.



A Nyasirori lion enjoys the early morning sun.

Picture by Ed Kaaya.



A buffalo herd forces this lioness to retreat into a tree for safety.

Pictures by Calson Luka.



A brand new member of the Sasakwa plains.

Pictures by Edward Kaaya.

