

Singita



WILDLIFE REPORT SINGITA OKAVANGO DELTA, BOTSWANA For the month of July, Two Thousand and Twenty-Six

Temperature

Minimum recorded: 08.0°C (46.4°F)
Maximum recorded: 30.5°C (86.9°F)

Rainfall Recorded

For the month: 0 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise: 06:56
Sunset: 17:59

The Delta has been dry and water levels continued to be high. Temperatures remained warm throughout the month, with none of the usual colder fronts passing through. July was characterised by exceptional leopard sightings, with the concession offering consistent and rewarding encounters throughout the month. We were also lucky enough to see some unusual characters in the form of an aardwolf, honey badgers, civet, and African wild cat.

Here's an overview of the sightings for July:

Large predators

- Lions have been seen regularly throughout the month. Two big males were spotted various times wading across the water, resulting in exceptional sightings. A lioness with five subadult cubs was regularly seen, as well as several other individuals.
- The leopard sightings were particularly encouraging this month. Multiple previously unknown leopards were recorded during July, with sightings including individuals hunting and mating. Like the lions, they were spotted frequently in and around the water. The female leopard with two cubs was seen feeding on a lechwe. During a remarkable three-day period, the team identified 15 different leopards, highlighting the concession's healthy leopard population.
- Hyenas were seen every single day this month.
- The wild dogs were seen a few times and are expected to be denning.

Predators

- There was an aardwolf sighting this month, one of the highlights in July. Aardwolves are seldom encountered in the concession due to their elusive and nocturnal habits.
- Banded, slender and dwarf mongooses were frequently encountered throughout July, often foraging in family groups around termite mounds and woodland areas.
- There were multiple honey badger sightings, along with two sightings each of African civet and African wild cat. All three species are generally elusive and mostly nocturnal.

Large herbivores

- Elephants, buffaloes, giraffes and hippos were spotted daily, in particular in the recently burnt areas. The team spotted a beautiful large journey of giraffes in the south, of at least 20 individuals.

Herbivores

- Lechwes were still in full abundance this month, taking advantage of the high flood water levels.
- Warthog, impala, greater kudu and zebra were seen daily.
- Other herbivores also made regular appearances throughout the month. These included steenbok, tsessebe, wildebeest, bushbuck, common duiker and common reedbuck.

Hares, rodents, small mammals

- Scrub hares and squirrels are the most frequently spotted small mammals in the concession and can be seen on every game drive.

Reptiles and amphibians

- Angolan reed frogs were seen frequently during boat and mokoro rides, clinging to reeds and other waterside vegetation. With a keen eye, they can occasionally also be seen from the game drive vehicle, particularly when driving through a water crossing.
- Nile crocodiles and water monitors made frequent appearances along the flooded channels, lagoons and riverbanks.
- Leopard tortoises, resident throughout the concession, provided consistent sightings.

Birds

- The team had a few Pel's fishing owl sightings. The Pel's fishing owl can be found in sections of riverine woodland, where it roosts in large trees near the water.
- With the high-water levels, a few lesser jacanas were spotted. Lesser jacanas are seen less frequently than their larger relative.
- African fish eagles, bateleurs, African jacanas, saddle-billed storks, marabou storks, southern ground hornbills and wattled cranes were all spotted regularly in July.

A closer look at one of the unique aspects of the Okavango follows, as well as our July Gallery.

Focus on the termite mound



Termites play a key role in shaping the Okavango Delta landscape. Thanks to termites, the Delta's thousands of islands were formed and continue to develop today.

The mounds are constructed during dry periods. The mounds become the first elevated, dry spots in the floodplains. Once they raise above the water level, birds, bees, primates and other animals drop their seeds and plants start to take root. The mounds are transformed into life-giving islands, with trees like palms and jackalberries.



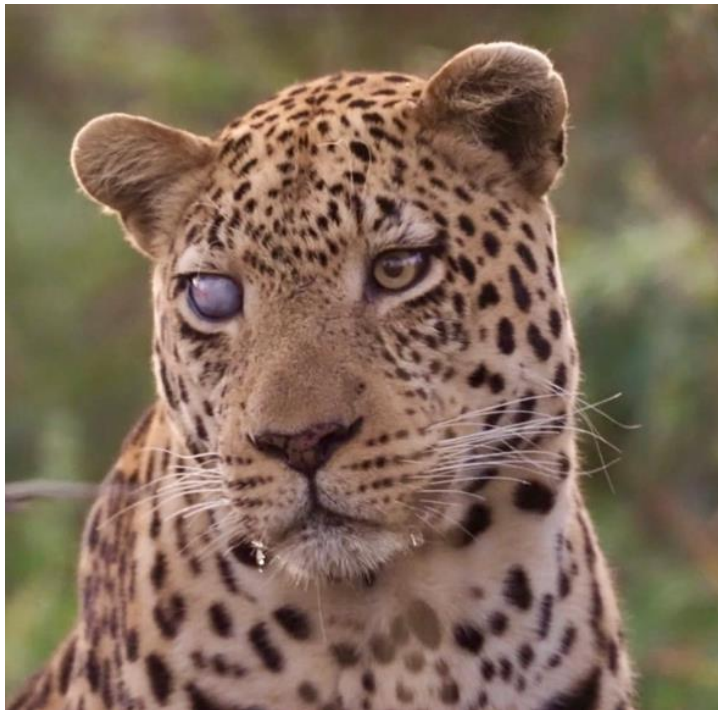
Lions, leopards, baboons, and many other species, enjoy the termite mounds too. They provide dry land and offer an elevated vantage point, allowing them to rest and scan the surroundings.

Fish eagle with its takeaways.





An unknown, relaxed leopard up a tree, enjoying the late afternoon sun.



The new male leopard from the north, with one blind eye. He was seen mating with one of our female leopards, Bame.



Red lechwes in abundance.

*Day-blooming water lilies open in the morning and close late in the afternoon,
attracting day-flying pollinating insects.*





Top: Lions lying around...

Bottom: A display of southern ground hornbills with palms like fireworks in the background.





Guiding team camaraderie.

Photos by Ross Couper, Tops Xani, Anderson Sekgwa, Erina Pindar and Bateng Kgowa.