

Singita



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

Temperature

Average minimum: 17°C (62.6°F)
Average maximum: 32°C (89.6°F)
Minimum recorded: 16°C (60.8°F)
Maximum recorded: 34°C (93.2°F)

Rainfall Recorded

Faru Faru 148mm
Sabora 160mm
Sasakwa 128mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise 06:52
Sunset 19:00

February has been an interesting month with reasonable rainfall. We have seen some wonderful herds of topi in the west, elephants in the central regions and good predator numbers throughout the reserve. Overcast days with reasonable humidity has been great for reptiles, like this 'Jackson's forest lizard' seen above, photographed on the Grumeti River. The river continues to flow, the waters a little muddier now as the rains increase further upstream.

Here's a sightings snapshot for February:

Lions:

- The Butamtam pride is looking well and strong and has providing some great viewing this month. They have on a number of occasions hunted buffalo successfully. They have been patrolling between the Old German Bridge and Koroya Hill.
- The Nyasirori Pride have been active in the Sabora region, not too far from the camp.
- The Bangwezi Pride continue to do well with cubs growing ever stronger.



Leopards:

- Great sightings of the Grumeti North Female and her daughter along the Grumeti River, close to the Old German Bridge.
- We have had some good leopard activity on Sasakwa Hill recently with a large male that frequents the lodge area quite often.
- A female has also been seen moving between the rooms of Sasakwa Lodge.
- We have had some good sightings of a shy male on the Sabora drainage, just south of Sabora Camp.

Cheetahs:

- Fantastic sightings of the Sasakwa male this month. The “veteran” male cheetah of the Sasakwa plains continues to do very well. We watched him successfully hunt two warthogs this month.
- A mother and youngster have been sighted between Sabora Camp and OP 7 from time to time.



Elephants in the West, close to Sabora Camp. Photograph by Jimmy Ikamba.

Elephants:

- Elephant numbers on the reserve have been fantastic this month with some large aggregations on the open grasslands, as they move from woodland to woodland.
- Good groups of large bulls have been seen following the herds with some truly impressive individuals.
- We have seen some fantastic herds of elephant bulls in the Chumvi River region of the north-west Ikorongo.
- Awesome aggregations of 200 – 300 individuals in the western woodlands, towards Singita Explore's Marula Camp.

Hyenas:

- Very good spotted hyena activity this month, especially in the central and southern regions.
- A very active den-site south of OP 7 has been offering some great interactions between youngsters and other members of the clan.
- Great hyena activity on the Nyati grasslands.

Buffalos:

- Buffalo herds are looking ever stronger here on the Grumeti Reserve.
- Herds seem to have been very successful with the rearing of calves and the herds are looking well with the many new additions.

Plains game

- We have experienced lovely herds of eland, zebra, gazelle and giraffe on the plains south of Koroya Hill, providing some fantastic photographic opportunities.



The beautiful Grumeti North Female photographed by Calson Luka.

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

“After the rain, grasslands thrill with the shrill trill of crickets, as courting toads convulse swollen, speckled throats, burbling leathery love songs, like the melodic thrum of rattle & drum.”

∞ Kathryn Apel ∞

With the good rains here on the Grumeti Reserve recently, we have seen an explosion of activity at the puddles, waterholes and streams! Frogs and toads begin their song at the water's edge, on their quest for a partner that will ensure a future for them here in the Serengeti.

The amphibian activity on overcast days and at dusk is sometimes overwhelming as large numbers congregate to call to one another. Puddle frogs, kassinias, reed frogs, rocket frogs and guttural toads are but a few of the species that can be heard... and if you really take the time to look hard you might even steal a brief glance of these interesting little beasts!

The Guttural toad is widespread and common throughout Tanzania. Like many amphibians and reptiles, the female is usually bigger than the male. You will notice on the picture below the round ear opening behind the eye which is known as the tympanum. Behind this, you will see the raised, lumpy parotid gland which may ooze a toxic secretion if the toad is disturbed or molested – it is a perfect defence measure against predators. The guttural toad feeds mostly on insects. Males will call from the edge of breeding pools in the hope of intercepting a female. This is a well-known African night sound.



The guttural toad (*Bufo gutturalis*). Photographed by George Tolchard on Sasakwa Hill.

Many amphibians remain dormant or inactive during the dryer months, waiting patiently for the rains to arrive. The next time you're on an adventure through the Serengeti during the rainy season, keep your eyes and ears open for these marvellous little creatures. A rewarding find and well worth the time spent trying to track them down.



Left: A common reed frog photographed on the Rubana drainage.

Right: The Senegal kassina photographed on Sasakwa Hill.

Photos by George Tolchard.

The common reed frogs vary hugely in colour forms making them particularly interesting. These little amphibians are typical savanna dwellers and quite common here on the Grumeti Reserve. They have a pretty song, often heard along the streams at this time of year.

Another little firecracker that can be found at this time of year is the kassina! A beautifully marked frog with large eyes. Interestingly, the kassinass are also known as "running frogs" and when they feel threatened or nervous you can see that they literally run away rather than hop! They are awesome to see up close. You will notice a large eye with a vertical pupil like many of the tree frogs. The call of the male is a beautiful liquid rising "boink!" or a large drop of water falling into a bucket - it is a very distinctive sound in the field.

February Gallery



A mother elephant and calf photographed on the Sasakwa Plain by Bernard Hosea.



Lions and elephants on the move, in the rain, on the Sasakwa plain. Photo by Carlson Luka.



Butamtam Pride members feasting on the Sasakwa Plains. Photos by Calson Luka.





A shy male leopard seen on a young zebra kill. Photographed by Calson Luka.



A Nyasirori lioness and youngster. Photograph by Calson Luka.



A beautiful relaxed leopard photographed by Jimmy Ikamba.



Guide John Ngowi introduces guests to some members of the West Pride. Photo by Jimmy Ikamba.



A lovely sighting of a young palm nut vulture (left) perched with a hooded vulture (right) in the Ikorongo. Photograph by Jimmy Ikamba.



An incredible picture here of a single roan antelope. Photographed by James Ikamba in the Ikorongo region.



A Common Rock Thrush photographed by George Tolchard on Sasakwa Hill.



Well-fed Butamtam Pride members photographed by Calson Luka.



The Sasakwa veteran male cheetah watches over the plains. Picture by Bernard Hosea.



Hyenas feasting on a Butamtam Pride buffalo kill. Picture by Andrew Kavenga.



A lovely scene as zebra and giraffe cross the Grumeti River together. Picture by Saitoti Olekuwai.



A bull elephant feeding beneath turbulent skies. Picture by Godson Birdi.



The Mbogo drainage male leopard looks yonder. Picture by Godson Birdi.



A stunning serval sighting on the plains beneath Sasakwa Hill. Picture by Godson Birdi.