

The Serengeti Lion Project Report August - September 2008

Gol Kopjes Pride (Simba East)

Time for another report from the Serengeti Lion Project! Let's start with the Gol Kopjes Pride, ADS's "adopted" lions. We thought it might be fun for you to see a side by side comparison of some of the 2007 cubs in this pride to appreciate just how much they've grown up over the past several months. Sammy's getting a mane!

Then



Sammy at 2 months old.

Now



Sammy today, at 1 year 7 months old.

Then



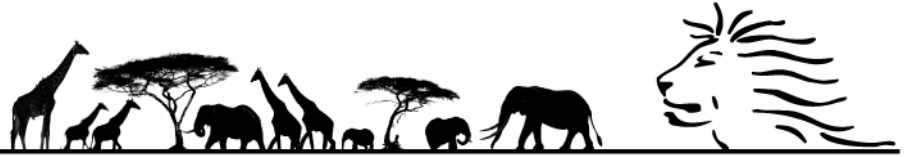
Sarah and Sonia at 2 months old.

Now



Sarah and Sonia today, at 1 year 7 months old.

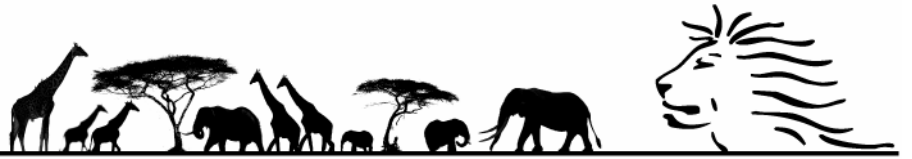
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Today this pride is on the move! The last few weeks they have been hanging around in Cub Valley, not far from an area with a lot of old abandoned wells, some of them probably several hundred years old. These wells were probably made by the old pastoralist tribes that used to use this area, including the Maasai. On August 7th I found Sophie, Sasha, Sabrina, Samantha, Sarah, Sonia and Sammy there, as well as the resident males Longo-Longo and Ricardo. All the lions had blood in their faces, so they must have eaten something in the early morning. Next time I found them, the 14th August, there were more lions.... Sophie was there, as well as Sasha, Sabrina, Samantha, Sarah, Sammy and Sonia. But also Splash was seen with her cubs SB112 and SB113! The cubs are still alive! Amazing, as I thought they were dead. Longo-Longo was there and Ricardo as well. The last time I saw them was on the evening of 26th August, and they were far away from the area they know. In fact, they had intruded right into the territory of another pride we call Jua Kali! This area lies approximately 3 km north east of the 3rd hill along Five Hill Track. Or rather about 7-8 km west of Sametu kopjes, so they were not so far from the territory of the pride Cub Valley either. I'm sure they had moved this far in hopes to find better hunting grounds. Some places on the plains are quite plentiful with prey right now, while others are totally empty. The Gol Kopjes pride was probably just not satisfied with their resident prey at the moment. Of course there could also be other reasons for them to move so far, like the Vumbi pride females or unknown males which have been passing through Cub Valley and making them a bit "uncomfortable". Longo-Longo and Ricardo were not with them on this day, at least I could not see them in the long grass. Sophie, Sasha, Sabrina, Samantha, Sarah, Sammy and Sonia were the only lions present there. Just as I was leaving them, one of the younger ones tried to hunt a hare, but was unsuccessful.



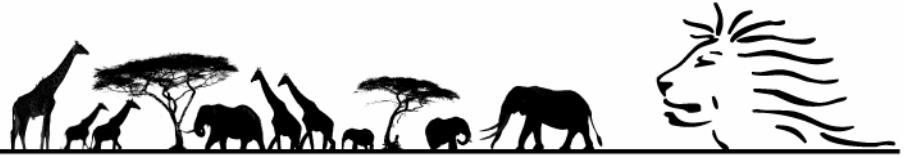
Simba East far out from their normal territory, into Jua Kalis territory.



Samantha of the Gol Kopjes Pride lounging in the long grass plains



Sabrina of the Gol Kopjes Pride lays in the grass nearby



Cub Valley (Sametu Pride)

During August I have found Cub Valley mainly in two places, at Sametu kopjes and close to Ngare Nanuyki River. Vanilla has always been seen around Sametu, when the other collared female Vivian closer to Ngare Nanuyki. Some lions are more often at either one of these places, while others have been seen on both places. The 8th August I found Vanilla and Dusk together in the south-eastern part of Sametu kopjes. There were also one new cub, I have given that cub the name CV87. I cannot say for sure that Vanilla is the mother to CV87, but most likely she is.



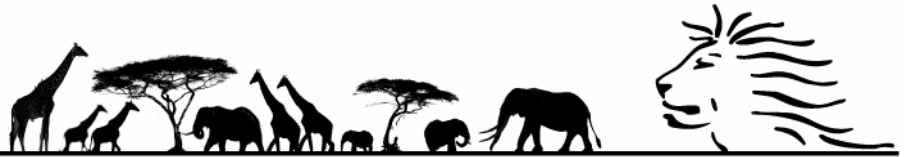
Vanilla with the new cub CV87.

Dusk still has pus coming out from her forehead; the last time I saw her was 23 August, and it seems to never heal. Except for that and her slanted face, she looks just normal. She is now almost as big as an adult female!



Dusk on the 8th August, just hanging out with Vanilla and CV87.

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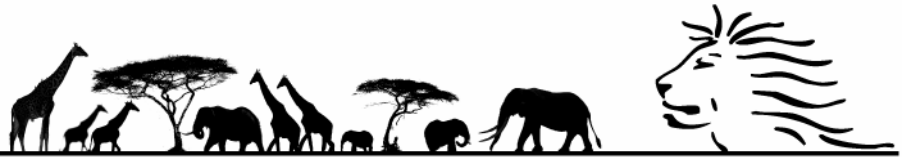
On the morning of the 17th August, Valkyrie and Valhalla were sleeping in Sametu marsh, just around Sametu kopjes. To the side were two of the resident males, Zeus and Demeter, sleeping as well. Around the females were five cubs, in three different sizes, likely three different ages. One of these cubs was CV87, so if Vanilla is the mother, she had left her cub or cubs to Valkyrie and Valhalla. The other cubs have been given the names CV88, CV89, CV90 and CV91. Shortly after I arrived, Valkyrie woke up and walked away, she was followed by CV87, CV88, CV89 and CV90. Then a few minutes later Valhalla walked away as well, in another direction, followed by the younger CV91. Valkyrie walked over to a kopje with the four cubs, and left them there. Then Valkyrie followed in Valhalla and CV91's footsteps, out in the grass, following the dry stream bed a couple of hundred meters and decided to rest there. About an hour later, Vanilla, Viola and the sub adults Dawn, Dusk and Twilight showed up in the grass; they had come back to the Sametu kopjes area, probably after a night of hunting. Viola, Dawn, Dusk and Twilight joined Valkyrie, Valhalla and CV91 in the sunshine. Vanilla left the group and walked over to the kopjes, back to the four little cubs and started to give them all milk. By that time Zeus and Demeter had also joined them in the nice shadow from the trees.

At the same time Vivian and Victoria rested about 9 km away, close to Ngare Nanuyki River. They had met their old resident male Dougal, who was resting together with them! Or maybe he planned a little affair? It's of course hard to say. Dougal and his mate Garth were exchanged by the Greek Gods sometime in October or November 2007, and then Dougal and Garth took over the Loliondo pride from the resident males there, on the other side of Ngare Nanuyki, in November. Or more likely, the resident males in Loliondo (four males born in Cub Valley!) had already left Loliondo for Young Transects, when Garth and Dougal joined them. It's hard to say in detail what really happened, because these three pride changed resident males all around the same time. Seems to be the same kind of soap opera we have written about before!



Dougal resting with his former females.

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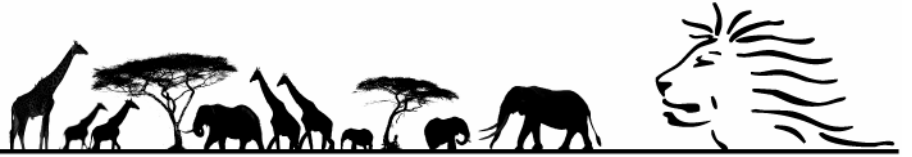
The 23rd August the collared female Diane, from a related pride to Cub Valley, Vumbi, met Valhalla. Valhalla was resting on a small anthill when Diane discovered her. Valhalla walked down the anthill and continued forward to Diane, but then she changed her mind, turned 180 degrees and slowly walked away from Diane. Diane continued to the hill where Valhalla had been, sniffing her fragrance. Once Valhalla was up on another hill, approx 100 m away, Diane laid down in Valhalla's old spot. When I left them, Valhalla continued on, followed by Diane.



Diane smelling Valhalla's fragrance.

These two females are related, both born in Cub Valley. Their code names are therefore CV08 and CVK respectively. CV08 or Valhalla was born in March 1999 and CVK or Diane was born in April 1997. But they have never lived together in the pride Cub Valley, but it is likely they have met each other before out there on the plains. Hard to tell if they usually meet as some kind of "known lions" or enemies. But either way, I assume they are usually a bit worried when they meet like that, and avoid getting too close to each other. As I was observing them in the field during this encounter, I incorrectly ID'ed Valhalla in the field. Instead of Valhalla, I thought it was Diane's pride mate, Vera. So I could never understand why they behaved in that way; I thought maybe they just didn't recognize each other. It was first back home when I compared photos, I realized it was Valhalla. If I had known it was Valhalla, I had followed the females for a much longer time to see what they were doing!

On the same day as the above described meeting between Diane and Valhalla, Vanilla, Valkyrie, JB and the other Greek God Demeter were all resting in the grass just a couple hundred meters north of Sametu kopjes. Suddenly Valkyrie ran off for a hunt of Thomson's gazelles. It was around lunch time, and it seems Valkyrie was as hungry as I was. After a while the others followed her, except for the 15 year old JB; she probably knew the chances were not too good for them to succeed out there in the open grass in the middle of the day. Zeus was resting in the Sametu march at the same time. When the four Thomson's gazelles discovered Valkyrie, they just ran off approximately 50 meters, and then stayed there and stared at the lion.



Valkyrie looking intently at four Thomson's gazelles.

More than 9 km away, in approx the same area as 17th August, were Vivian, Viola, Victoria, Valborg, Dawn, Dusk and Twilight resting.

I have not seen Vivian's three cubs any more, and the last time I saw her I could not tell if she was lactating or not, but I do know she was still lactating 17th of August anyway. It is likely the cubs are still alive, just hidden.

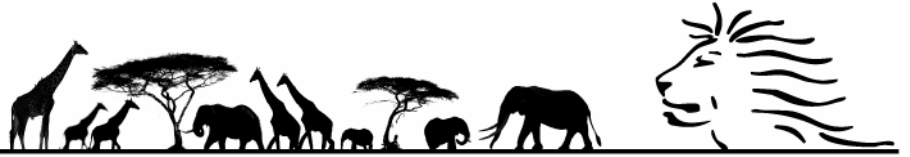
Lions not seen during this period include Vallmo and Triangle Eye. Triangle Eye is most likely dead by know.

Maasai Kopjes

Now we are well into the dry season, and the lions of the Maasai Kopjes pride are mainly found along the Seronera River, on the east side of the main road. So if you go there for a drive in the early morning or late afternoon, and you see some lions, it is likely the lions of Maasai Kopjes.

The two solo females Trinity (from the Maasai Kopjes pride) and Solo (from the Maasai pride) have been seen together one more time! But lately I have just seen Solo by herself again. The last time I saw her, she was with a Thomson's gazelle that was freshly killed. During a visit along Seronera River on the 10th August I spent around 6 hours exclusively with the Maasai Kopjes pride. They were spread out along the river, and executed five hunting attempts during the hot afternoon hours. They targeted Reedbucks, Waterbucks, Thomson's gazelles and Hartebeests. The other "social" female in this pride with name Trinity was involved in some of the most exciting hunts this day.

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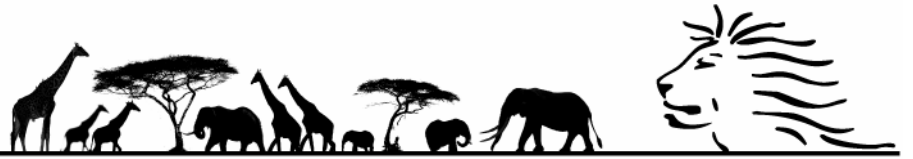
It all started around 1 pm, when she discovered “something” in the grass, just a few meters from both me and her. I could not tell what it was. She lay down in the grass for approximately 20 minutes, and then she slowly stalked forward, very low to the ground. She moved only 3 meters and then suddenly started to run. In the same second a Reedbuck female sprang up, just approx ten meters from Trinity. Trinity ran for 30 meters after the Reedbuck, but the Reedbuck was faster, so she slowed down and rested for a while until finally moving on. Fifteen minutes later she found a small herd of Thomson’s gazelle in front of her; the Tommies were in a burnt area, so Trinity had to stalk them with almost no cover.



Trinity stalks Thomson’s gazelles in a burnt area; not much cover here....

Another 15 minutes later Trinity moved down to a dry korongo and some minutes later the gazelles moved away a little bit. Maybe the gazelles saw Trinity the whole time (often when the herbivores discover a carnivore, they start to stare at them and actually move a bit closer), even if they reacted as they never did see Trinity. But it could explain why they moved away a little bit; when Trinity disappeared into the korongo, maybe they got a bit worried when they not could see here anymore. After I checked on the other lions of Maasai Kopjes, I found Trinity again, this time 1.5 km up the river. Now she was stalking Hartebeests and Thomson’s gazelles. Some minutes before five o clock, she was so close to the herbivores and seemed to be just waiting for the right movements from them. One minute before five o clock there was a Hartbeest going straight to where Trinity was, but she did not do anything, even though the Hartebeest were withing 10 meters away. Not until the Hartebeest turned around and walked a few meter from her, and could not see Trinity’s first move, she started her attack. In the first meters of the rush, it really looked that Trinity might succeed! But then the Hartebeest reached full speed and the gap between Trinity and the Hartebeest got longer, and she gave up just after approx 40 meters rush.

Almost two weeks later I found Trinity again, along the same river with a new cub, MK129. The cub walked over to a rotten Hippo carcass, which smelled really badly. But the smell did not hinder the MK129; she went right over to the rotten carcass and ate a little bit of it.



Trinity and MK129 in the late afternoon sun, along the Seronera River.

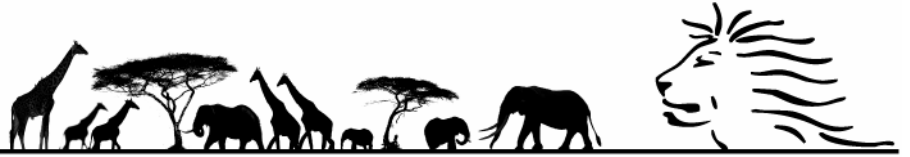
Lions seen during this period include Trinity, MK129, Kennedy, Madeline, Cordelle, Jordan, Jane and the yearlings Anita (MK116), Zeke (MK118) and Blixten (MK119), as well as the resident males Fello and Jellow. I have seen one additional lion in this group, but I could not ID her; it was likely Jezebelle, Mutant or Matoeko.

Mukoma Gypsies

There is not much news about Mukoma Gypsies. I have actually just seen them one time during this period, on the 9th August along the Seronera River. I saw Little My and Snork there, both with full bellies. Suddenly Little My heard or smelled something and abruptly trotted away; it turned out to be an adult Thomson's gazelle male. Little My ran after it but her hunting attempt was unsuccessful. Snork did a shortcut and continued running after the gazelle when Little My gave up. But Snork also failed and came back after a quick rush of approx 100 meters. Later in August I tried to find them again; I had heard the signal from Little My's transmitter in the area between Seronera River and Songore River, but it was impossible to cross over to where she was.

Mukoma Hill

The Mukoma Hill pride has been hard for John to find. Nor could I seem to be able to find them, not even the collared female Mia. Not even a signal from her. It's always a bit worrying when none of us have heard a collar for a long time. In the late morning of 20th August, I was driving along the Seronera River looking for any members of Transects. I had passed their normal hang-out area and was thinking of turning around, and then I suddenly saw a lone lioness. Soon after spotting her I saw the collar on her.... At first I was a bit confused,

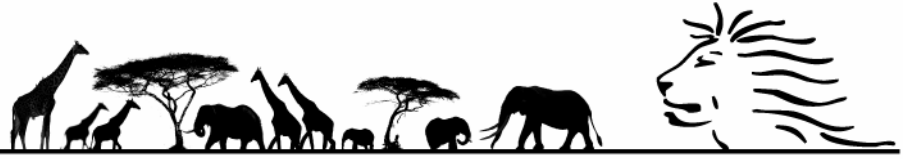


because I was scanning and could not hear anything from the collar. But when I drove closer to the lioness, and she stood up, I immediately saw it was Mia! Maybe you remember she is one of the two lionesses with missing tails (or almost missing) in our study area, so she is easy recognized.



Mia with her non working transmitter in the collar, before the darting.

I immediately called the veterinarian Richard Hoare; luckily he was available and showed up as soon as possible. He darted her and she fell to asleep after approx 10 minutes. I took the old collar off her; it has been on since 3rd July 2003, so little more than five years in use. It is not unusual for the battery to get a bit weaker when they have been in use for four to five years, but it should have worked for another couple of years. Her collar has always given a normal signal (until it suddenly disappeared) so we had decided to keep it on until we could hear it getting a bit weaker. Since we can usually hear her collar so well from Mukoma Hill, she is typically easy to find, at least in the dry season. After I had taken off the old non working collar, I gave her a new one. The vets drew blood samples as usual and we picked ticks off her coat. I took photos of her teeth and did some body measurements. We always take some tail tuft hairs, but it was impossibly this time since Mia does not have much of a tail any longer. She lost her tail in July 2003, after she got the last collar. The 20th of July she was found with her tail severely injured, cut about 15 cm from the “root”. Then from the 28th on the tail was gone from that point, and since then she can only wag the small stump of her tail. Okay, back to August 2008. After she got an antidote, she woke up and tried to walk away, just 6 minutes after receiving it. She hid herself down in a bush, and I left her. One and a half hours later we checked on her and everything was looking normal. John checked up on her again the next day, and she still looked just fine. Three days later I found her again, still alone, but still normal. We have not seen any other members of Mukoma hill during this period.



Mukoma Mischief

The 9th August, the Mukoma Mischief pride was hanging out at the Seronera river, not far from the Transects' and Campsites' area. Molly, Miranda, Mugumu and the yearlings Uddjaur, Hornavan and Storavan were there, together with two new cubs. Another drive in the area the 11th August, trying to hear anything from Mia in Mukoma hill, I found the resident male Wallace up on a kopje in That's kopjes. It had been a long time ago since I saw him, so it was great to see him again! However he did not like to see me again, and he went down from the kopje into hiding so I left him. Normally male lions are even more comfortable with vehicles than females, but not Wallace this day!

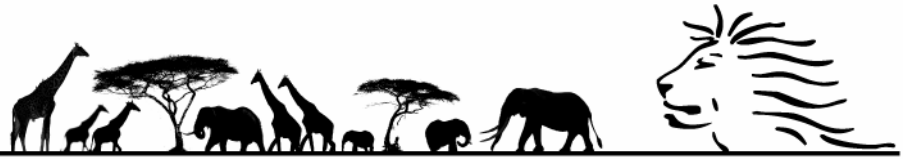


Wallace perched up on one of the kopjes in That's kopjes, also called Black kopjes.

On the 24th August I found Molly, Miranda, Mugumu, Uddjaur, Storavan and Hornavan resting just a few hundred meters from the Acacia tree the Serengeti Balloon Safaris normally use for shade during breakfast with clients. Together there were the two cubs, probably the same cubs I saw together on 9th August. It was one female, who I have given the name MML and one male, who I given the name MMM. The first time I saw these cubs was 15th of June, at which time they looked about 2 month old. Originally there were four cubs total, so two of them are now missing. The remaining cubs are now about four months old. Their mother's name is Mugumu. The father is unknown, as usual, but I am guessing Wallace is the father to these cubs.

Storavan, a sub adult male that is almost a year and a half old, has still not developed any mane like his brothers and cousins. Storavan is easily taken to be a young female.

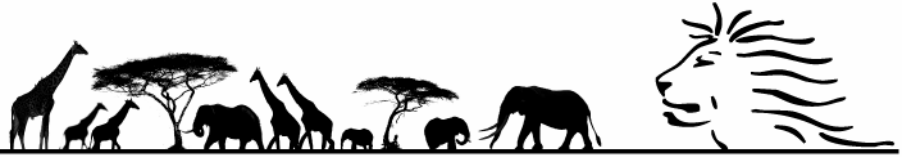
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Storavan is a year and a half old, but still with no mane, so he is looking a lot like a young female.



Hornavan plays with MMM and bites him playfully. Compare his growing mane with Storavan's. Unlike Storavan, Hornavan has the beginning of young male's "mohawk".



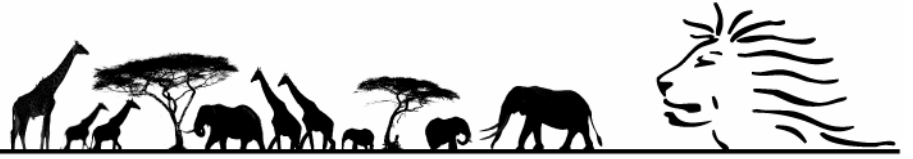
The other collared female Melba is still missing. Since February we have not been able to hear any signal from her, either from land or air, so she is probably dead. But since then I've now found the missing Mia and her non working collar in Mukoma Hill, it gives me some hope that Melba is still alive and it is just her collar that does not work any more. So maybe we will find her.

New Naabi

The big male lion Porky is still with the New Naabi pride! And interestingly enough, so is the young male Narnia! Porky seems to accept Narnia's company, so far. The 6th August, the collared female Layla was hanging out with Caerphilly, Carmarthen and her son Narnia approx 5 km east north east of Naabi hill. Porky was there too, and all the lions were lying close to each other. The next time I found them, they were together on the eastern slope of Naabi hill. The very last time I saw them was 26th August, when they were back on the open grasslands north east of Naabi hill, approx 8 km in the direction of Moru kopjes. The three females were present, as well as Narnia and Porky. Interestingly enough, Porky has not ever chased Narnia away as it would be normal for a resident male lion to do after a take-over; it is the second time I have seen such an event with my own eyes since I came to Serengeti in Dec '06. First it was the Greek Gods who accepted the sub adult females in Cub Valley, and now Porky seems to accept Narnia in New Naabi, at least for a while. We now consider Porky to be the resident male in New Naabi. I still wonder where Wales Boyo and his sons have gone? Probably to a new pride around Lake Ndutu.



Porky, seen here with the almost 2 -1/2 year old male Narnia and the rest of the New Naabi females.



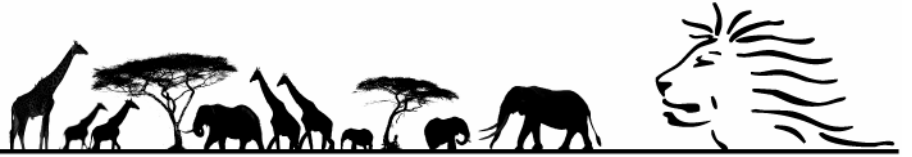
Transects

Lately I have had a little better view of the new cubs here in Transects. The collared female Zico has three cubs, they are TR155 (probably a female), TR156 (a male) and TR157 (a female). And Zola has today at least two surviving cubs; they are TR151 (a male) and TR154 (a female). I have seen them only two times during August; the first time was 4th August, when these cubs and their mothers were all seen together with Zamorano and the resident males Holger and Nikko. They were on the south east slope of Nyaraswiga hill with the remnants of a killed adult zebra. The next time I saw them, they were at Borner's loop. Zico and her three cubs were there, and Zola and her two cubs. There were also two younger females I have not seen for a while. One of them was Tarragon, a three year old female which was consorting with Nikko, maybe her first experiences in her sexuality. And the other one was Madicken (TR137), one of the twelve sub adults born in 2006. Madicken is one of all girls in Astrid Lindgren's tales (if you don't know Astrid, she is a very famous Swedish author for children's books; one of her most famous works is Pippi Longstocking).



TR156 in a tree

I've noted Nikko has a wound, or something which never seems to heal. I discussed it with Richard Hoare, the TAWIRI vet, and he said it could be infected or not healing because Nikko keeps irritating it. At first I thought it was cancer, since we had a female in Plains with cancer, but the vet did not think so. We will see how things go for Nikko with enough time.



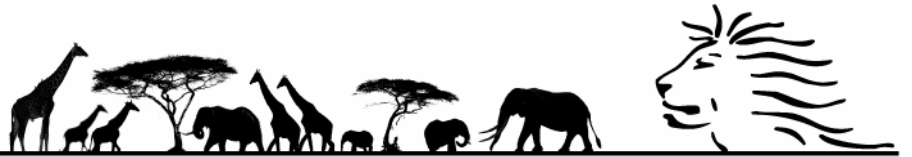
Nikko with his never healing wound.

There are a lot of other females and all the other sub adults and yearlings we have not seen in Transects for several month, they probably hang around Seronera River, we have just not found them.

This is everything from me and Serengeti Lion Project this time. I hope you will have a fine autumn. Till next time...

Patrik

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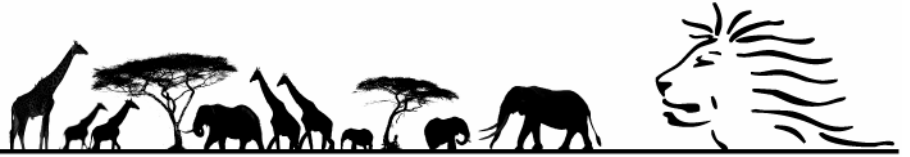


THE SERENGETI LIONS

A BRIEF HISTORY AND KEY

***INFORMATION PROVIDED EXCLUSIVELY FOR AFRICA DREAM SAFARIS
BY THE SERENGETI LION PROJECT***





History of the Simba East Pride (Gol Kopjes Pride)

Many of you already know about our special “adopted” lions in this pride. The Simba East Pride, a.k.a. the *Gol Kopjes Pride*, consists of three females – Sophie (SB69, born June ‘97), Sasha (SB87, born Feb. ‘02), and Splash (SB88, born Feb ‘02), as well as eight adorable lion cubs. Starting in early April of 2007, many of our clients and staff witnessed the playful antics of this special pride first hand and with such tiny cubs it is not surprising we all fell for them.

The eight lion cubs range in size and age: The two older female cubs, Sabrina and Samantha, were born in June 2006; they also had a sister (SB103) which sadly perished around Aug 2006. The three middle cubs were born in early Feb 2007, and are comprised of two females, Sarah and Sonia, and one male by the name of Sammy. The three youngest cubs, Stacia, Sky, and Simone (all females) were born in early March 2007; these 3 cubs regrettably perished in the late dry season of 2007. The fathers of these cubs are a coalition of two magnificent male lions, both born in August 2002; their names are Longo-Longo (S#82; blond mane and a scar on his left hip) and Ricardo (S#84; dark mane and no tail tuft).

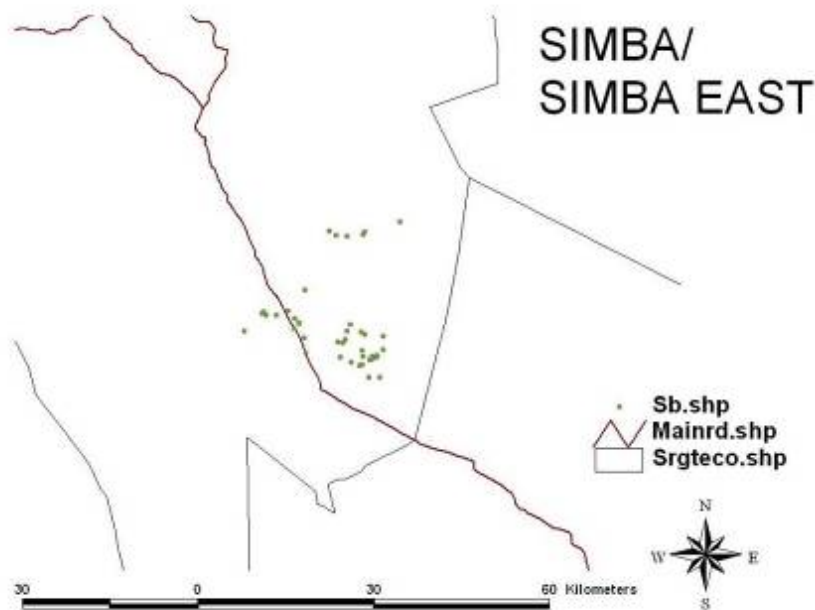
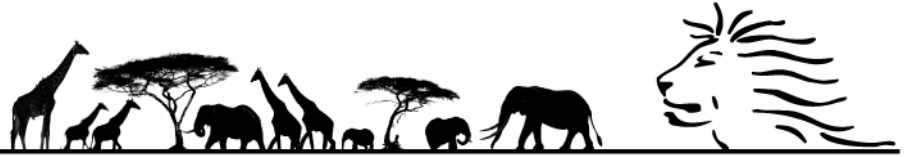


Fig. 1: The observation points of the Simba East pride during one year, 2006. For easier location; the slight bend in the road in the South East is the location of Naabi Hill, the Y-junction of main road in the North is in Seronera area.

As it turns out, the lions of the Gol Kopjes Pride are direct descendents of one of the very first prides studied by the Serengeti Lion Project when it began in 1966. This original pride had split up several times, forming a family tree that branched throughout history in prides such as the Simba Numbers Pride (still living, last seen south of Naabi Hill), the *Sympatica* Pride (now gone, last seen in 1990), the Simba West pride (now gone, last seen in 1987), the Simba Survivors (still living, last seen near Simba Kopjes), and the Simba Ramblers (now gone, last seen in 1996).



History of the Cub Valley Pride (Sametu Pride)

The Cub Valley Pride got their name from Cub Valley where they hang out sometimes during the green season. We often fondly refer to them as the *Sametu Pride*, as we often see them at Sametu Kopjes as well. This is a large pride, thriving mainly in the long grass plains of the Serengeti. They hold their territory in the green season around Sametu Kopjes, and it extends southeast following the valley we call Cub Valley, ending between Zebra kopjes to the north and north Gol kopjes to the south. In the dry season they are still found around Sametu kopjes, but more likely north of Sametu, into Kibumbu kopjes and Ngare Nanyuki river. They are also sometimes around Bomas kopjes and the grasslands into Five hill track.

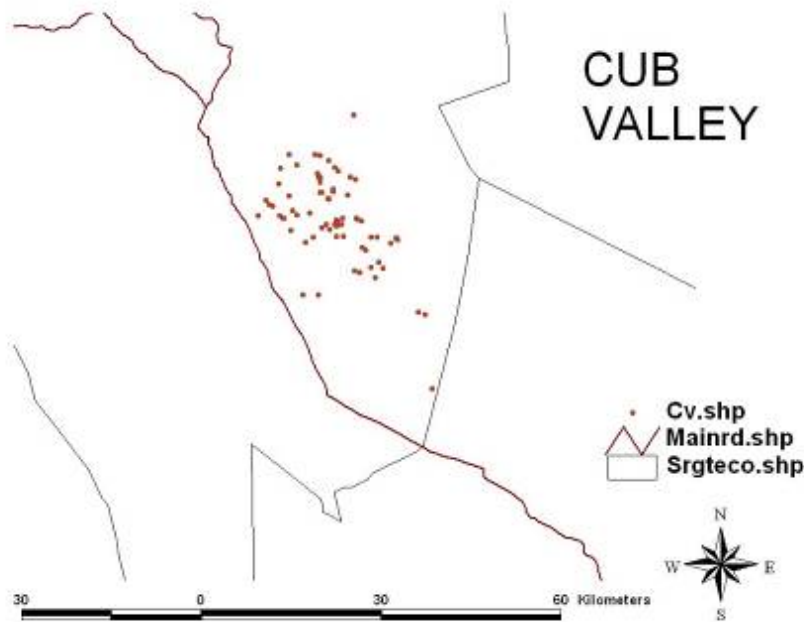
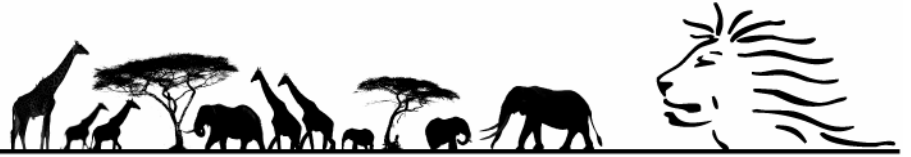


Fig. 1: The observation points of the Cub Valley pride during one year, 2006. The borders between Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Loliondo Game Controlled Area are in grey/blue The main road is dark red. Seronera are just a bit south of the Y-junction of the main road.

The origin for the Cub Valley pride began several years ago with the pride Maasai Kopjes. Once a pride gets too large, some members usually leave to establish a new territory for themselves. Somewhere between late 1996 to early 1997 a group of 11 young females, all born between June to September 1993, split up from their mothers' pride Maasai Kopjes and formed the Cub Valley Pride. They found a new territory to the east of where they had grown up. Today only three of the founding ladies who once left the Maasai kopjes pride are still alive... Vivian (with a collar), Victoria and JB. The rest of the core of this lion pride is formed by their daughters Valkyrie, Valhalla, Viola, Vallmo, Valborg, and Triangle Eye, all born between 1999-2001. Dawn, Dusk, and Twilight are newly initiated members, born in mid-year 2006. Up until late 2007, Garth and Dougal were the resident male lions for this pride, but they were getting older.... Garth at 11 years and Dougal at 9. In November of 2007, a fearsome coalition of 4 strong male lions initiated a take over of the pride. These four handsome males are known as the "Greek Gods" and are comprised of the individuals Zeus, Apollo, Ares, and Demeter. These new resident males are young by comparison to the elders they ousted, all born between 2000 and 2001. It will be interesting to observe the activity of this pride in the future with these new males now residing.



History of the Maasai Kopjes pride

This pride has as its base the Maasai Kopjes, in the very heart of Serengeti. They frequently hang out on and among the kopjes themselves. The Seronera River, and to a lesser extent the Wandamu Rivers, are big attractions to these lions, and they are often seen in the high grass along the rivers, stalking prey sometimes, but mostly doing what lions are really great at; just sleeping. Their territory is a rich one in the eyes of a lion. It has many good sites for denning, plenty of fresh water (lions in Serengeti like to drink at least once per day), and prey available year around. The large kopjes offer good shelter and shade, the rivers nearby offer water, and the territory offers good hunting opportunities for stalking prey that is forced to come close to drink from the rivers. Thus the pride can house many members, even though the territory size is relatively small. See below for a map of observed locations of the members of this pride over a year's time. During the rainy season when the migration is down in the South Eastern short grass plains, we now and again see members of the Maasai Kopje pride going SE for a short while to feed on the ample supply of wildebeest and zebras.

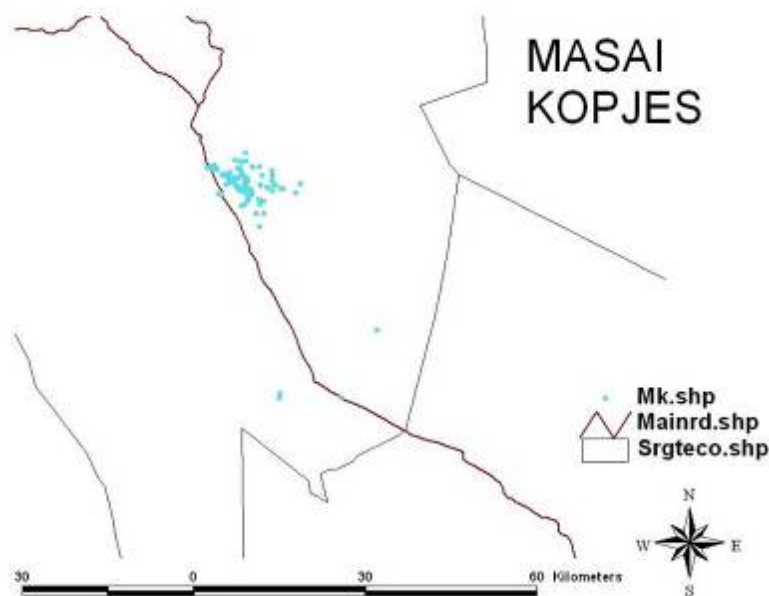
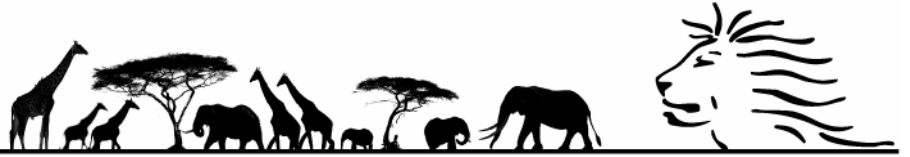


Fig. 1: The observation points of the Maasai Kopje pride during one year, 2006. For easier location; the slight bend in the road in the South East is the location of Naabi Hill, the Y-junction of main road in the North is in Seronera area.

The Maasai Kopje pride originates from a group of 6 sub-adult females (born between Apr-80 and May-81) who split off from the Maasai Pride at the end of 1982 to escape a coalition of four males (BC1, 2, 3 and 4) who had taken over their natal pride. (The Maasai Pride was a primary focus for the original researchers of the Serengeti Lion Project, George Schaller and Brian Bertram, as early as 1963.)

Today the Maasai Kopjes pride consists of 12 adult females: Madeleine, Jezebelle, Trinity, Kennedy, Cordelle, Jordan, Mutant, Jane, Trinity II, Matokeo, and 3 sub adults Mikari, Meosha, and Malick. Sadly Malick passed away at the very end of 2007. The resident males are the aging "Fellow" and "Jello," and they were first seen as the reigning males of this pride in early 2002. They may look quite worn with age, but the old chaps are still doing grand!



History of the New Naabi Pride

The lion pride that is often seen around the Naabi Hill is called the New Naabi Pride. The origin of this pride is unknown, but they were first observed, and henceforth recognized as a pride, in April 1983. The range of this pride is limited to the short-grass plains, with its center being Naabi Hill. The pride ventures away from the hill as far as Hidden Valley, however they do not seem to use the Gol Kopje area (that lies 15 km NE of Naabi Hill).

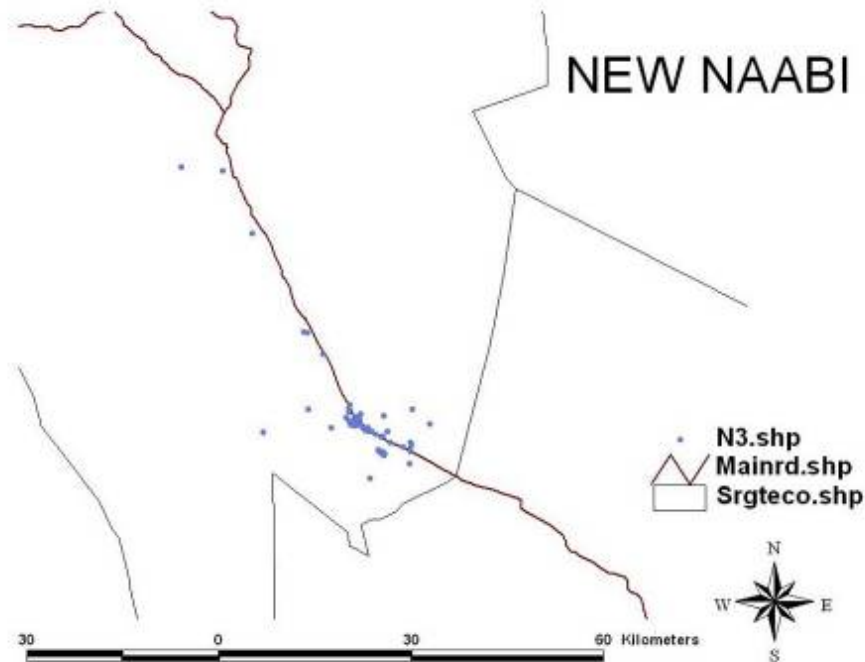
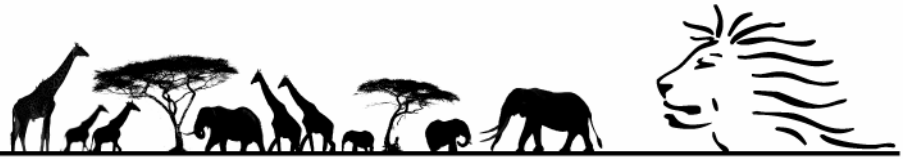


Fig. 1: The observation points of the New Naabi pride during one year, 2006. The coordinates far north of Naabi hill are the observations of NN07 when she was very ill. For easier location; the slight bend in the road in the South East is the location of Naabi Hill, the Y-junction of main road in the North is in Seronera area.

Today the New Naabi Pride consists of 2 adult females, Lea (born Apr. '92) and Layla (born May '98). Both these females wear a radio collar. Until Oct. '06 we still had regular sightings of Lychee, a female member of this pride. Lychee is our all time Grand Old Lady lion, as she was born in early 1987. We suspect Oct. 26th will remain our last sighting of her and that she died shortly after. She was then almost 20 years, and is the oldest lion that we've known of in the wild! Further, in the New Naabi Pride there are another 2 sub-adult females, Caerphilly (born Jan '04) and Carmarthen (born Mar.'04). Carmarthen is easy to distinguish with her broken off tail-tip and her cloudy left eye. Then the pride has 4 sub-adult males; Dafyd (born Jun -03), Llanduduo (born Mar '04), Llanelli (born Mar '04) and finally NN56 (born Mar '06).

Wales Bolo (born 1998-99 from unknown origin, first seen in Nov -03 when he was mating with Lea) is "king" in this pride, a lone male residing in the pride since late 2003. For a single male to hold the reign of a pride for this long, and successfully raise a large number of litters, is quite unusual. Normally a single male gets ousted long before he gets an opportunity to protect his pride until the offspring reach an age of independence. Wales Bolo is a strong lion indeed!



History of the Transects Pride

This is a huge lion pride often seen during the dry season along Seronera River, just opposite Kerr's dam and the Seronera Wildlife Lodge. The origin of this pride is unknown, but the first sightings of this pride were in early March 1981. The Transects' territory includes the open woodlands around Seronera roughly bordered to the West by the Seronera River, to the East SRI, to the South by the Seronera airstrip, and to the North by Nyaraswiga Hill. During the dry season, these lions often just hang out around the Seronera River. In reality, these lions hold a very small territory compared to other lion prides on the plains. They are able to thrive due to the abundant resources of this small but rich territory. Here in the Seronera River Valley they can find prey, water, and good den sites to rear their cubs no matter the season. Everything a lion could wish for! The support offered by these ideal conditions significantly lowers cub mortality and therefore increases the number of members in the pride. Many sub-adults of such a large pride eventually move away to form new prides. So the Transects Pride continues to populate surrounding areas with a healthy supply of lions!

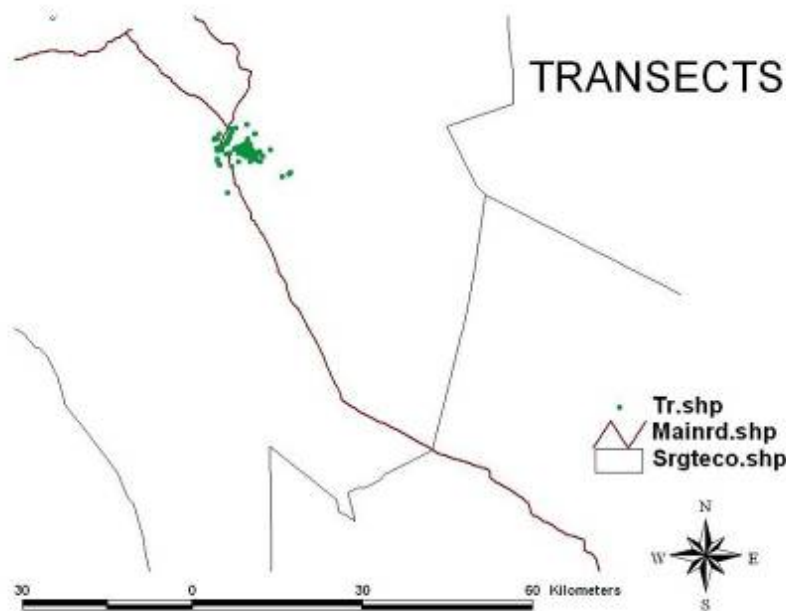
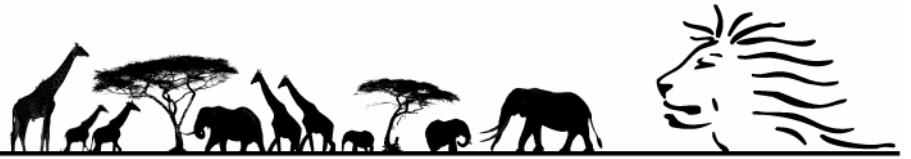


Fig. 1: The observation points of the Transects pride during one year, 2006. You can see the borders to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Loliondo Game Controlled Area in grey/blue. The main road is dark red. The Y-junction of the main road in the North is in Seronera area.

The *Transects* pride has split up several times, forming various prides that seemingly share similar territories without too many squabbles; they are all “family,” after all. Some of these other prides are the *Young Transects*, the *Transect Troublemakers*, and the *Transect Truants*.

As of late 2007, the core of the Transects pride members include: 7 adult females: ZZ, Zenden, Zamorano, Ziege, Zola, Zico, Ziziphus, and Tarragon. Tagging along are 4 sub-adult females, 3 sub-adult males and 5 older cubs. From March 2006, up until recently, the resident males in Transects today were a coalition of two lions, Porky and Pie. But a male lion's reign only lasts for so long out here in the bush! This pride was recently taken over by two younger lions, Nikko and Holdger. This pride has been famous for its large numbers; during the year 2002 and 2003 there were around 40 members! Today there are well over 20 lions, including all the sub adults and cubs.



History of the Mukoma prides

The Mukoma prides of today are actually split up in three different prides; the original *Mukoma Hill Pride* (which we'll focus on here), and the 2 branch prides that have split apart from them; the *Mukoma Mischief Pride* and *Mukoma Gypsies Pride*. As is common when prides split apart, the newly formed prides have taken up a territory that adjoins their natal pride. These three prides hang out around the Mukoma Hill (hence their pride name).

The Mukoma prides live in good lion habitat. See the below map for the most recent positions of our observations of members of these prides. They have good access to Seronera River – with its water and constant prey availability. At certain times of the year, the grass plains between the river and the Mukoma Hill have big passing herds of wildebeest, zebras and gazelles on them. Denning sites are easily found in the thick vegetation along the River and its tributaries. Some of the lions den inside niches of Mukoma Hill the Thatch Kopjes.

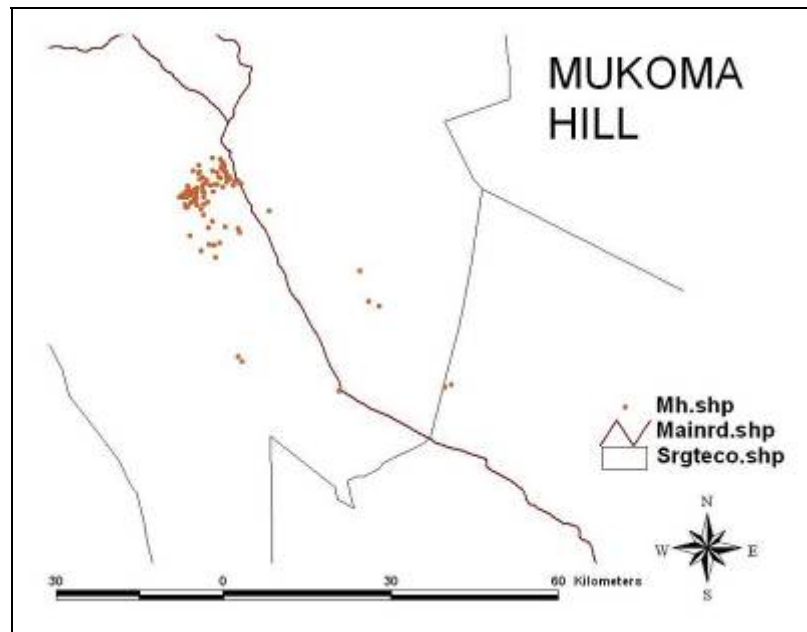
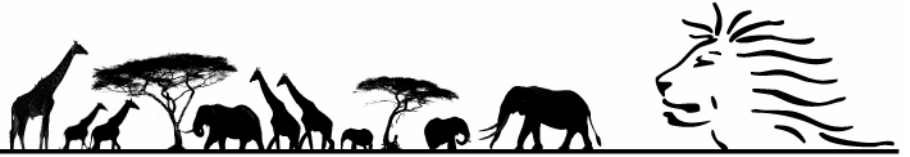


Fig. 1: The map above shows the observation points of the Mukoma Hill Pride during one year, 2006. For easier location; the slight bend in the road in the southeast is the location of Naabi Hill, the Y-junction of main road in the north is in Seronera area. The grey lines are the boundary of Serengeti NP.

The origin of the Mukoma Hill Pride is unknown, and they were first observed and recognized as a pride from early Feb 1986. The lions that were first seen were the 7-year old females “Hatari” and “Hadhari”, the 6-year old female “Hasira” and the 4-year old females “Hamaki” and MHE. In April 1987 they got “Cocktail” and “Truman” (both approx 6-years old) to join as their resident males. It seems that were some young females that had split away from their natal pride and started a pride of their own – which they did successfully.

Today the core of the Mukoma Hill Pride consists of 4 adult females, Tat, Mia, Meg, and Melody, along with their various cubs, plus another female Mint that we now regard as solitary. The resident males, Wallace and William, were first seen consorting with the Mukoma females at the beginning of 2006. Wallace and William still hold the residency of all three Mukoma prides.

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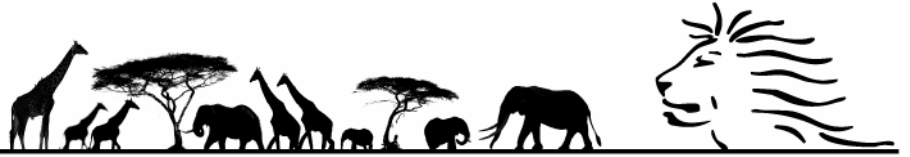
Lion Pride Name Number M or F DOB Other Notes

Lion Pride	Name	Number	M or F	DOB	Other Notes
Gol Kopjes (Simba East)	Sophie	SB69	F	Jun-97	
	Sasha	SB87	F	Feb-02	
	Splash	SB88	F	Feb-02	
	Samantha	SB104	F	Jun-06	
	Sabrina	SB105	F	Jun-06	
	Sarah	SB106	F	Feb-07	named by ADS
	Sammy	SB107	M	Feb-07	named by ADS
	Sonia	SB108	F	Feb-07	named by ADS
	Stacia	SB109	F	Mar-07	missing, presumed dead
	Sky	SB110	F	Mar-07	missing, presumed dead
	Simone	SB111	F	Mar-07	missing, presumed dead
	Not yet named	SB112	F	Feb-08	smaller than brother
	Not yet named	SB113	M	Feb-08	
	Not yet named	SB114	F	Feb-08	missing, presumed dead
	Longo Longo	S82	M	Aug-02	current resident male; blond mane; scar on left hip
Ricardo	S84	M	Aug-02	current resident male; dark mane; no tail tuft	

New Naabai	Lea	NN07	F	Apr-92	collared lion; has been missing since Oct '07
	Layla	NN32	F	May-98	
	Lychee	-	F	Feb-87	Presumed Dead; last seen October 2006
	Caerphilly	NN51	F	Jan-04	
	Carmarthen	NN52	F	Mar-04	
	Dafyd	NN49	M	Jun-03	
	Llanduduo	NN53	M	Mar-04	
	Llanelli	NN54	M	Mar-04	
	TBD	NN56	M	Mar-06	
	Wales Bolo	-	M	Oct-98	current resident male

Cub Valley (Sametu)	Vivian	MK11	F	1993	has a collar
	Victoria	MK19	F	1993	bluish right eye, maybe blind
	JB	MK21	F	1993	
	Valkyrie	CV03	F	1999	
	Valhalla	CV08	F	1999	
	Viola	CV18	F	1999	bluish right eye, maybe blind
	Vallmo	CV24	F	2001	
	Valborg	CV25	F	2001	
	Triangle Eye	CV27	F	2001	
	Vanilla	CV32	F	2001	
	Dawn	CV61	F	Jun-06	subadult
	Dusk	CV62	F	Jun-06	subadult; has distorted facial features maybe from an injury to the head
	Twilight	CV63	F	Jun-06	subadult
	Zeus	PN89	M	Jan-00	current resident male
	Apollo	PN90	M	Feb-01	current resident male
	Ares	PN92	M	Feb-01	current resident male
Demeter	PN94	M	Feb-01	current resident male	

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Lion Pride Name Number M or F DOB Other Notes

Lion Pride	Name	Number	M or F	DOB	Other Notes
Maasai Kopjes	Madeleine	MK29	F	Mar-96	
	Jezebel	MK30	F	Mar-96	
	Trinity	MK34	F	Jun-96	has 5 teats; normal is 4
	Kennedy	MK37	F	Jun-96	wears a radio collar
	Cordelle	MK39	F	Aug-96	
	Jordan	MK42	F	Sep-96	
	Mutant	MK45	F	Jan-97	
	Jane	MK76	F	Oct-01	
	Trinity	MK83	F	Mar-02	solitary
	Matokeo	MK91	F	Mar-02	
	Malick	MK108	M	May-06	named by ADS - Ms. Eilert's 5th Grade Class
	Mikari	MK109	F	May-06	named by ADS - Ms. Eilert's 5th Grade Class
	Meosha	MK110	F	May-06	named by ADS - Ms. Eilert's 5th Grade Class
	Fellow	-	M	1997	current resident male
	Jellow	-	M	1995	current resident male

Mukoma Hill	Mint	MH19	F	May-96	solitary; blind in left eye
	Tat	MH22	F	Aug-98	
	Mia	MH37	F	May-99	missing tail
	Meg	MH39	F	Jun-99	
	Melody	MH52	F	Aug-02	
	Mwezi	MH80	F	May-04	
	Nyota	MH81	F	May-04	
	Kadoko	MH82	M	Aug-04	subadult; gradually separating from pride
	Moran	MH86	M	Sep-04	subadult; gradually separating from pride
	Wallace	-	M		current resident male
	William	-	M		former resident male coalition with Wallace; probably died in Nov'07

Transects	ZZ	TR28	F		
	Zenden	TR33	F		
	Zamorano	TR37	F		
	Ziege	TR39	F		
	Zola	TR54	F		
	Zico	TR56	F		
	Tarragon	TR132	F		
	Ziziphus	TR52	F		always has a limp, since an incident in 2005
	OTHER	OTHER	-	-	5 subadult females; 3 subadult males; 5 older cubs
	Nikko				current resident male
	Holger				current resident male
	Porky	PN70	M	Dec-98	old resident male, no longer in power
	Pie	PN79	M	Jan-99	resident male who is now missing; may be dead