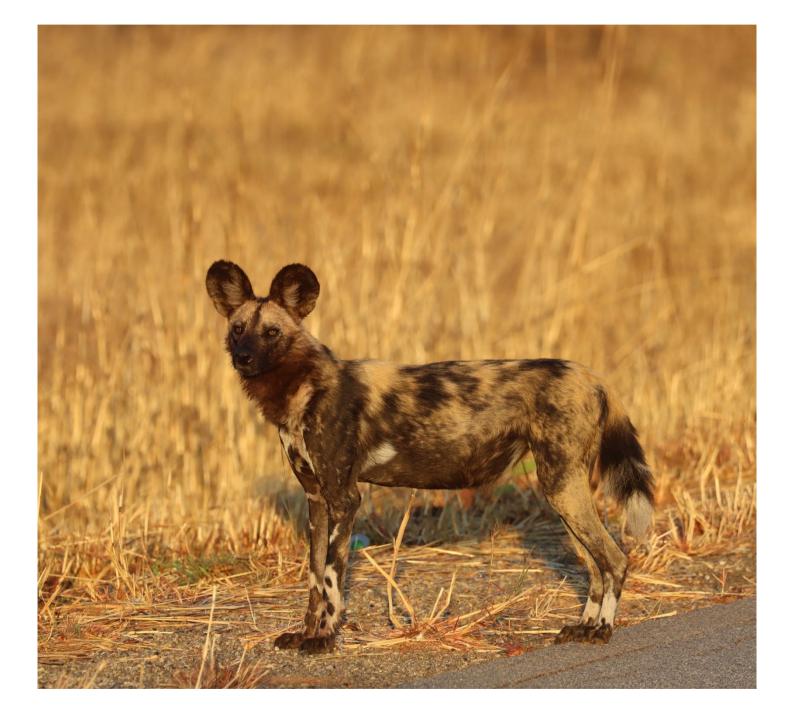


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ZAMBIA

Date - August 2023

Duration - 21 Days

Destinations Lusaka - Kafue National Park - Busanga Plains - Chunga - Lake Itszhi-Tezhi - Nanzhila Plains

Trip Overview

Having tried for a while now to organise an extended stay in a single reserve, the opportunity finally presented itself at Kafue National Park in Zambia, where I was due to visit several lodges as part of the southern Africa circuit I have been researching, which will ultimately also include Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and possibly Malawi. For those who are not aware, Kafue is one of the largest reserves on the continent and I had consequently arranged to assess eight different lodges during my 21-day stay, travelling in the process from the famous Busanga Plains region in the far north to Nanzhila Plains in the south. Despite its enormous size and obvious significance in the region, Kafue has not been well managed over the years and decades of underfunding and neglect have severely damaged its reputation as a premier safari destination. Poaching has devastated large areas of the reserve and human encroachment, particularly in terms of the rampant charcoal production that pervades much of the country, has severely impacted both the environment and wildlife populations. Nevertheless, large tracts of wilderness have endured, as has the diversity for which the park was always justly famed, if not perhaps the densities required to fulfil its potential as another of Africa's natural masterpieces. That though could all be about to change, as roughly a year before my visit, the management of Kafue was



assumed by African Parks, a non-profit conservation organisation who have an excellent record in terms of protecting vulnerable and in some cases severely damaged reserves. In all African Parks are now solely responsible for the management of 22 reserves across twelve countries and at each, large scale poaching has either been significantly reduced or more or less entirely eradicated. Vast numbers of animals have been translocated to bolster existing populations or reintroduced where a species has previously been wiped out and there are already plans to reintroduce black rhinoceros at Kafue. In the short-term, a host of herbivores will be introduced where necessary, largely to support the growing predator populations, and the ultimate aim at Kafue is to fully restore the ecosystem and ensure that the park is ecologically, socially and financially sustainable on a lasting basis. This is the case in terms of all of the reserves within their care, as African Parks commit much of their resources to community development and understand that these sanctuaries need to benefit both the wildlife they protect and the local people who they need to help protect them. Historically this has not always been the case of course, but African Parks clearly recognise that conservation without communities is doomed to failure and that it is necessary, indeed morally responsible, to ensure that the indigenous populations who have relied on these lands to support their families for generations are not suddenly cast aside. As such, I have continued to support African Parks over the years and have more recently determined to visit and introduce my guests to as many of their reserves as possible, from Ennedi and Zakouma in Chad, to Akagera and Nyungwe in Rwanda, Matusadona in Zimbabwe and Odzala in the Republic of Congo. Next year I intend to also visit Bazaruto in Mozambique and both Liwonde and Majete in Malawi and I will be delighted to return to Kafue in perhaps five years, as I am fairly convinced that not much longer will be required to transform the oldest reserve in Zambia into one of the most important national parks in all of Africa. To be fair, and although there are clearly significant issues that need to be addressed, some of which I observed during my visit, Kafue is already an outstanding reserve in many respects and has been fortunate in a way that the region suffers from an abundance of tsetse flies, as these bloodsucking parasites are probably the main reason that the land was not settled for agricultural purposes. In addition, Kafue is surrounded by nine Game Management Areas, or GMAs as they are known, and these buffer zones have largely borne the brunt of any human encroachment and the environmental destruction that invariably follows. So whilst densities remain woefully low in places and clearly African Parks have a great deal of work to do here, diversity has not suffered irreparably and Kafue already supports 27 different carnivores and twenty antelope species, which I understand makes it the most diverse reserve in terms of antelope in all of Africa. I would have to check if that is correct, but certainly I encountered more individual mammal species here than at any single park on my last tour to Zimbabwe by some margin, 46 in all compared to the 31 species observed at both Mana Pools and Hwange. Whilst I spent a great deal longer at Kafue than either of those



two equally famous reserves, that does not automatically guarantee that you will see a correspondingly higher number of animals and after just four days here I had observed 35 species, again more than at Mana Pools and Hwange, but in less days than I spent at either. Conversely, this total had increased by just eleven across the entire 21-day tour, which clearly illustrates just how tough some of the game driving currently is at Kafue. Even at my favourite bush camp down at Nanzhila Plains, where we did have a reasonable amount of success at night, the daylight drives were often unproductive, at least in terms of certain species. In ten extended drives at Nanzhila, so between five and seven hours each, I had one sighting of three lions walking away at distance, a single female eland, also at distance, and precisely zero buffalos. The lion encounter, if you can even call it that, was the only one in the last eleven days of the tour and in my first nineteen days at Kafue, I chanced upon precisely four male buffalos, all huddled together in a single group. When you consider the astounding standard of the reserves across the region, including renowned gems like Etosha, Chobe and the Okavango Delta, Kafue cannot even begin to compete in terms of sustainable tourism, but you equally have to remember that this park is now very much a work in progress and will be unrecognisable in just a few brief years. I have to add, that I was also incredibly unfortunate with a couple of species, including buffalo, as they do occur in large numbers at Kafue and a few days before my arrival, a lion attack had caused a herd of more than a thousand to stampede, which had tragically resulted in almost 50 being killed. Obviously my lack of buffalo sightings was completely insignificant in terms of such a catastrophic event, but it does demonstrate how a single indiscriminate incident can instantly change an entire area and your experience of it. 'The best laid schemes' I guess and another example was far more amusing later in the trip, when I encountered a vehicle from a different lodge at the beginning of a night drive. As is always the case, the two guides stopped to exchange information before we drove on and they continued in the opposite direction. Our drive was unusually quiet, with just a couple of savannah hares to show for our efforts and I did not think anything of it until I changed lodge the next morning and was informed that the vehicle we had passed had encountered two aardvarks, two leopards and a porcupine. That is just the way it goes and whilst luck will always play a part in any wildlife activity, you can stack the odds in your favour by choosing the best lodges and guides. This is especially the case when you are travelling with just a guide, as most African camps will assign a guide on arrival and you usually have to hope that the better the camp, the better the guide. This does not always follow of course and although all but one of the lodges I tried were extremely comfortable in terms of their facilities, some are clearly being run more for the owners and management than their guests. At one camp the morning activity would take place between 6.30am and 10.30am and the afternoon excursion, a completely meaningless walk in a severely degraded patch in one of the community buffer zones, was scheduled between 4pm and 6pm, at which point all of the guests were ushered together to watch the sunset. No nocturnal activities were offered and when I attempted to arrange a more worthwhile hike during the day, basically just to kill time until the next activity, I was told this was not permitted because it was too hot. Dinner was over by around 7.30pm, at which point all of the guests were expected to toddle off to bed and although the lodge was situated in an undeniably breathtaking location, I moved on at the earliest possible opportunity. To expect paying guests to tolerate at least eighteen hours of downtime every day is simply not acceptable these days and if I were only able to offer one piece of advice to each potential safari client, it would be to hire a private vehicle if they can possibly afford it, as you can avoid most of these issues if you have your

own vehicle and guide. I always do so for my own trips, as it is more or less impossible to research an area with other tourists, all of whom will have their own interests and aspirations, and in this way I can generally dictate the time I spend in the field. At Kafue I would always depart at first light, which was around 6am, and return between 11am and 11.30am, depending on how successful we had been. I would then either take a walk at the lodges where this was possible or work until 3pm, at which point we would go out again until at least 8pm, which is apparently the time that you currently have to be back in camp. African Parks will need to extend this in due course, as it did not get dark until after 6.30pm and just over an hour is not sufficient in terms of finding many of the nocturnal species that occur here. I was fortunate that some of the more remote camps allowed me to spend longer spotlighting each evening, including to well past 10pm on a couple of occasions, and in all I was able to organise night drives on seventeen of the nineteen nights available to me, as my first evening was lost to the horrendous Lusaka traffic and a torturous road transfer of more than seven and a half hours. Kafue is an extremely scenic park and most of the lodges were set in idyllic locations with the type of ravishing views you would expect from largely upmarket camps. Some were better organised than others and although a few of the managers and owners were far less accommodating than others, all of the local staff were extremely friendly and helpful, which, in my experience, is almost always the case. The quality of the guides varied considerably as well, although none were what you would



call poor and one had the best eyes I have witnessed for some time. In general, the only obvious difference between most guides is their attitude and I have often said that it can be better to have an enthusiastic guide than a deeply knowledgeable one, depending on how that knowledge is applied of course. As a case in point, the guide with the superb eyes also worked extremely hard on my behalf and we would spend long sessions in the field each day, often driving beyond the extended hours I had requested. However, he had worked in the same park for more than three decades and appeared to have become almost institutionalised, both in terms of his approach to game driving and personal demeanour, neither of which radiated excitement. Instead, he did everything entirely by the book, which ultimately meant that we saw a great deal less than some of the other guests who were spending far less time in the field. During our ten days together, for example, we did not encounter a single leopard on our own, only with the help of other vehicles, and we missed at least eight of these iconic cats purely because my guide was so set in his ways and only wanted to drive the same loops that he had always known, regardless of whether they were productive or not. On several occasions, when we were given the location of a sighting, he would check the area in passing for about thirty seconds and move on if the animal was not immediately visible. This happened so frequently, that I became accustomed to returning to the lodge, only to hear that other guests had encountered the same animals that we had been told about, but did not bother to search for, despite knowing more or less exactly where they were. One particularly harrowing example probably sums up his attitude better than I can adequately convey and occurred as I was sitting suffering another of those interminable sundowners that every lodge feels it necessary to provide for their already over pampered guests. I had already explained that I was not interested in stopping for a drink and snacks during one of the best times of day to search for predators and whilst most guides are more than happy to accept this when you have a private vehicle, this guy was never going to break with a tradition he has upheld for over thirty years and insisted that we stop for light refreshments each and every afternoon. I therefore spent most of our breaks scanning from the vehicle and on this particular occasion I spotted a single wild dog running at speed behind us. I immediately rushed to grab all of the food and dishes he had laid out, to enable us to depart as quickly as possible, but instead he asked me not to and proceeded to calmly finish his tea and biscuits, before eventually packing everything away at his leisure. He even went to relieve himself behind the vehicle before we moved on and we finally departed more than ten minutes after the wild dog had disappeared. Needless to say, we did not see that particular doggy again and his only response was that 'these animals can move very quickly', to which I almost replied, certainly far quicker than we had. Fortunately, I am not obsessed with the apex predators that so many tourists need to see, but even for me, his lack of urgency and enthusiasm became frustrating at

times and it quickly became apparent that although he was always very happy to show you an animal, he was equally unconcerned if you did not see anything at all, just as long as he was doing the job that he was being paid for. Fair enough I guess and he was a nice guy, but if I had personally saved for several years for perhaps a trip of a lifetime, I probably could not help feeling disappointed listening to the stories back at the lodge of all the animals I had somehow missed. For me, the trip was a memorable one, despite the odd setback, not least because I have not been to Kafue for well over a decade and I can tell what an exceptional reserve it will become in time. Indeed, my return could not have begun more auspiciously, as four of my first five sightings were predators, from the pair of spotted hyenas I watched in our headlights on the drive in, to the African civet, leopard and wild dogs observed within the opening hour or so of my first game drive. It was an extraordinary start and if the rest of the tour did not quite live up to that beginning, it was never really likely to. As it was, I was able to explore more or less the length and breadth of one of the most extensive reserves in Africa and instead of producing the usual area by area account of my tour, I have decided to provide a little more detail regarding the species that you can currently either expect or hope to encounter here.



Order Carnivora - Family Felidae (Cats - 6)

Ten cat species occur in Africa and two of these, Sand Cat and Jungle Cat are only found towards the north of the continent. Of the remaining eight, African Golden Cat is largely confined to Central Africa and Black-footed Cat only occurs to the south of Zambia. The remaining six, Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, Caracal, Serval and African Wildcat, can all be found at Kafue. Indeed, these six species occur in most of the famous national parks that foreign visitors are familiar with south of the Equator, although it is fairly rare to encounter all six on any given trip. On each of my last two visits to Africa, I observed five of the six, missing a leopard in Chad in February 2022 and a serval in Zimbabwe last September. Usually the most difficult of the six is a caracal and indeed, this was the only cat that I missed this time at Kafue. In addition to eleven leopards, I chanced upon nine servals, two of which were spotted on transfer drives to and from Busanga Plains, with a further seven at one lodge at Nanzhila Plains, including five on a single extended night drive. Two of the leopard sightings featured females with cubs, one a male that was already larger than his mother and a younger female of around seven months. Of the individual sightings, the highlight was probably one of two brothers who live and hunt together, again in the Nanzhila Plains region. This particular male has developed a penchant for monitor lizards, which were previously widespread within his territory, but are now becoming increasingly difficult to locate. Indeed, we found him lying in wait at the edge of a shallow pool, just a few metres from the carcass of the last unfortunate reptile he had despatched. He was actually using an abandoned termite mound as cover and these are a distinctive feature at Kafue, many of which have grown into small islands over the years and are often covered with dense vegetation and trees. Several leopards were observed using these islands, as well as lions and a number of antelope species, most notably bushbuck, which customarily inhabit dense woodland and have clearly adapted to these small areas of shelter littered across the plains. Whilst it is not usually the case, beyond the rich floodplains of Busanga Plains in the north of the park, where they are common and easily observed, lions are much more difficult to locate than leopards and I

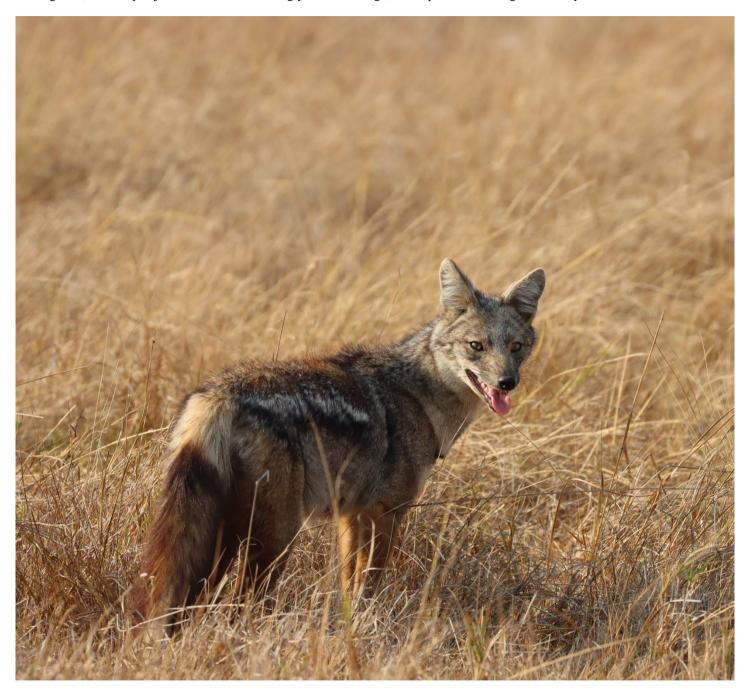


experienced just two encounters in the seventeen days I spent beyond Busanga. This is clearly why African Parks intend to translocate so many herbivores in the first instance, as these prey species are essential in terms of producing viable predator populations and consequently a healthy ecosystem. Very few tourists are going to accept a safari without lions, but I met several groups who were going to be leaving Kafue without seeing these iconic animals, purely because they did not include any time at Busanga. Of the remaining cats, cheetah are observed, but not with any regularity and I was fortunate to find a mother with her four subadult male cubs at Lake Itszhi-Tezhi. The mother and one of the males had been collared by the cat conservation organisation Panthera, who did intend to fit satellite tracking collars on one of each sex, only to discover that all four of the cubs were in fact male. I enjoyed the better part of an hour in the company of this beautiful family and only later learned that it had taken Panthera almost ten months to locate them. As you would imagine given how rare they are elsewhere, caracal are even more elusive than cheetah at Kafue, several of the guides I spoke to had never even seen one, and apparently wildcat are not a great deal easier. As it was, I had my guide with the amazing eyesight to thank for my one brief view of a wildcat, when he spotted just a brief blur of something in the tall grasslands before you reach Busanga. Upon further investigation I was able to clearly identify a wildcat skulking through the grass, which he was now not even able to see in his lower position as the driver of our game vehicle.

Order Carnivora - Family Canidae (Dogs - 2)

Depending on which relevant sources you follow, there are either eleven or twelve dog species in Africa and the anomaly involves the presence or otherwise of Blanford's Fox. What is not in doubt, is that this desert fox occurs in the north African country of Egypt, but here the waters muddy somewhat, as Egypt is what is known as a transcontinental country, which basically means that its territory falls within more than one continent. The Sinai Peninsula, which is believed to be the most westerly extreme of this fox's range, is actually part of Asia and, as such, some sources insist that this species is purely an Asian animal. However, the Suez Canal is generally regarded as the demarcation line between east and west and at least one blanford's fox has been recorded west of the Suez Canal, at Wadi Qiseib, overlooking the Gulf of Suez in the Red Sea. Given the number of similar fox species in this region and how easily confused they can be, there are almost certainly more and it is possible that this species occurs far further south in Africa than was previously known. So I am very much in the camp that believes that twelve dog species occur in Africa, although five of these are foxes found only in north and central Africa i.e. the aforementioned Blanford's Fox, Pale Fox, Ruppell's Fox, Red Fox and Fennec Fox. Two other foxes also occur, the Cape Fox, which is only found in southern Africa, and the highly distinctive Bat-eared Fox, which can be found in two entirely disconnected populations, as the subspecies Otocyon megalotis virgatus in East Africa and Otocyon megalotis megalotis approximately one thousand kilometres south. None of these seven foxes occur in Kafue and of the remaining five species, just two can be observed in Zambia's largest national park, African Wild Dog and Side-striped Jackal. The remaining African jackal species, the Black-backed Jackal, has a very similar distribution pattern to that of the bat-eared fox, in that it exists in two separate populations in east and southern Africa, and the canid formerly known as a Golden Jackal, which occurs across north and central Africa and as far south as the Serengeti in Tanzania, has recently been split from the golden jackal that exists in Asia

and is spreading west across much of mainland Europe. Whereas the two canids were always considered conspecific, the version in Africa is now known as the African Wolf, *Canis lupaster*. Finally, we have the striking Ethiopian Wolf, which is endemic to the Ethiopian highlands and occurs only at altitudes above 3,000 metres. Of these twelve species, the two found at Kafue are not generally that elusive, although obviously wild dogs have a massive range and sightings of these exceptionally effective predators can be hit and miss. I was extremely fortunate in that I had three sightings of these gorgeous dogs, one at the very edge of the main access road within less than an hour of my first game drive. I was alone as well and watched as the three dogs fed rapidly on an impala they had just killed, taking it in turns to break away from their meal and scout the surrounding area for any danger. My other two encounters were somewhat contrasting, with one guide refusing to make any effort to follow a lone animal that I had spotted running, as I have already touched upon, and another, using all of his skill to track down what turned out to be a group of four males. I love watching guides work in this way, from the second he heard the call of one of the dogs in the distance, they sound exactly like a bird unless you are very familiar with the call, to the moment we parked in what he thought must be their general vicinity, only to watch them walk out on the dirt road less than a hundred metres behind our vehicle. Utterly magical and we stayed with the four relaxing on the dusty track until one sprang to its feet and the remaining three instantly followed into the bush. These are amazing animals and although they produce perhaps less spectacular sightings, largely because they are far more commonly observed and you rarely see more than two together, side-striped jackals are also exceedingly attractive dogs, as I hope that this image accurately reflects:



Order Carnivora - Family Hyaenidae (Hyenas - 2)

With just four species in this family, hyenas basically cover the entire length and breadth of the continent and two species occur at Kafue, although they are both strictly nocturnal and consequently not easy to see. Spotted Hyena are the more widespread of the four and range as far north as Chad and as far south as KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, whereas Striped Hyena and Brown Hyena are pretty much geographically opposed, with the former occurring across much of North Africa and as far south as Tanzania and the latter occupying most of southern Africa. The fourth species, the Aardwolf, which is not actually very 'hyena-like' and probably should not even belong to the same family, basically shares the disjointed range of both the bat-eared fox and black-backed jackal, with distinct populations in east and southern Africa. Both spotted hyena and aardwolf are found at Kafue and my very first sighting

was of a pair of spotted hyenas as I arrived at night on the busy M9 road that cuts directly through the park. If I thought at the time that this might indicate that hyenas were common here, I was sorely mistaken, as I would see just six in total and the other four sightings were all of single animals, also at night. One of these was missing a leg, probably from a snare, but just like dogs, hyenas can function comfortably with three legs and this one was moving fast with no obvious impairment. Although I know several good areas for them further south, there were no obvious signs of an aardwolf and again a few of the guides mentioned that they had never seen one, although, to be fair, they spend very little time in the field after dark.

Order Carnivora - Family Mustelidae (Mustelids - 5)

These are among my favourite mammals and most sources agree that eleven mustelid species inhabit Africa, with a few dissenting voices regarding the Eurasian Badger and Marbled Polecat, both of which again occur on the Sinai Peninsula and would take the total to thirteen. Of the confirmed eleven, five occur at Kafue, African Clawless Otter, Spotted-necked Otter, Zorilla, African-striped Weasel and Honey Badger, which is the most widespread of them all and occupies most of Africa, with the exception of the Sahara region, as well as much of west and south Asia. I was very much hoping to observe at least the African clawless variety of otter, which I knew was possible at one lodge in particular, but I was not successful, despite a few hours devoted to the task. I was later informed that the Itszhi-Tezhi dam area can sometimes be good for this species and that they are rarely seen at either the lodge I was trying at or on the Kafue River in general, presumably because they are largely nocturnal and boats are never on the water at night, at least not legal ones. By way of more than a little consolation, I did experience three lovely honey badger encounters, two in the early morning light and one at night with a highly inquisitive male around one of the camps, the photograph of which I have produced below. In terms of the two weasels, zorillas, which are also known as striped polecats and striped weasels, are always feasible across their range, but for some reason, African-striped weasels are almost impossible and I have only ever seen one, at South Luangwa National Park, which is also in Zambia and lies about 600kms northeast of Kafue. Needless to say, I had no further good fortune with that species on this trip and missed the humble zorilla as well.



Order Carnivora - Family Herpestidae (Mongooses - 8)

According to most sources, Kafue is home to eight different mongooses and I have to admit that I was disappointed to encounter only three, as I had expected at least five and hoped for even more. Two of the three, Banded Mongoose and White-tailed Mongoose, were seen well and on multiple occasions, but I had only transitory glimpses of three Slender Mongooses, which is often the case with these solitary and customarily energetic little carnivores. Of the other five, I was probably most surprised to miss Common Dwarf Mongoose, as, just like the banded variety, these are a highly social species and it is not unusual to see them in sizable groups. Of the

rest, I had realistically hoped for views of both Marsh Mongoose and Egyptian Mongoose, which is known as Large Grey Mongoose in this region, with an outside chance of either Meller's Mongoose or Selous' Mongoose, which I had seen well at Mana Pools and Hwange in Zimbabwe last year. That tour did actually produce six different mongoose species, including five in just seven days at Mana Pools, so my expectations were not unrealistic here, but of course there are never any guarantees and several of my guides mentioned that most of the other species were all spotted reasonably regularly. As a side note, my guide in the Nanzhila Plains area is convinced that Bushy-tailed Mongoose also occurs at Kafue, which is eminently possible when you look at their known range, although they have never been officially recorded at this national park.

Order Carnivora - Family Viverridae (Civets and Genets - 4)

Only four members of the mammal family Viverridae can be found in Zambia and all four of these apparently occur at Kafue. Most sources state that there are three species of genet, Large-spotted Genet, Miombo Genet and Common or Small-spotted Genet, but none of the genets that I observed were the common variety Genetta, genetta, which has a highly characteristic white tail-tip, and it soon became apparent that most of the guides cannot distinguish between the three, if they were even aware that three exist here. Indeed, most referred to every genet as either the large-spotted or small-spotted varieties and only my final guide was able to tell the difference between a miombo genet and a large-spotted genet, as both of these have a black tail-tip. For the record, the miombo genet has a prominent black dorsal crest and its spots are in neater rows and of a more regular shape than those of the large-spotted genet, which has patchy blotches that vary greatly in shape and size, hence the fact that it is also known as a blotched genet. The two are fairly easy to tell apart in the field and although most of the genets encountered were the large-spotted variety, five of those that I took time to study were miombo genets. Again, I did not spot a single common genet and, based on their known range, I am not entirely convinced they even occur at Kafue. If they do, it is likely to be in low numbers towards the extreme south of the park, but it is just as possible that they have been misidentified previously, as I personally observed several guides doing exactly that on at least a dozen occasions during my stay. There is far less doubt regarding the remaining member of the family Viverridae, as it would be difficult to mistake an African Civet for anything else, either in terms of their distinctive stocky appearance or the way that so many of them just lie down in front of you, with their paws tucked under their chin. I have always regarded these robust civets as the bears of Africa and, as such, they are a favourite animal of mine and one that I make every effort to find whenever I return to a region in which they occur. Having somehow missed them entirely on a three-week tour of Zimbabwe in September last year, that did not take long on this trip, as one crossed our path in the dark within the first few minutes of my first morning drive and in all I encountered five across the entire tour, including the decidedly cute individual pictured below:



Order Cetartiodactyla - Family Bovidae (Antelope and Buffalo - 2I)

If you read almost any of the guides to Kafue, they will all invariably mention that this is the most diverse reserve in Africa in terms of antelope species and the majority will then state that 21 different antelopes occur here, including African Park's own website. At least the second element of this statement is factually inaccurate, although to be fair, it was once correct. To clarify, there used to be two separate species of waterbuck, Common and Defassa, but these have since been classified as a single species, *Kobus*



ellipsiprymnus, which has reduced the total for the park by one. However, very few sources appear to have picked up on this and the situation is further complicated by the fact that only one common waterbuck was ever recorded in the park, a lone vagrant female observed in the Ngoma region in May 1968. Although she went on to breed and to produce a small hybrid population on the Nkala River, that line appears to have been either bred out or perhaps lost to predators over the years. So whichever way you look at it, and even if both waterbuck subspecies were once again assessed to full species level, there can now only be twenty antelope species at Kafue. That said, the more pressing concern is that perhaps there are not even twenty anymore, as of the five species I missed, Steenbok and Klipspringer are not really being seen these days and many of the guides were not even aware that they occur in the



park. It is possible that small populations have endured of course, as neither of these species historically occurred in large numbers and for the steenbok, the Kalahari woodland in the south of the park represented the northern extreme of their range. Similarly, klipspringer only inhabited a few isolated rocky areas and if there are no lodges nearby, there would be no real reason to expect regular sightings. That certainly remains the hope and although I missed a further three species, Sitatunga, Blue Duiker and Yellowbacked Duiker, these are at least all known and guides were either able to recommend possible areas to search or at least confirm where they had previously seen them. I did try on two extended occasions for sitatunga, staking out the papyrus swamps of the



Busanga Plains for several hours, but the reed beds had recently been disturbed by a great deal of illegal fishing and African Parks had consequently deployed a team of armed rangers to patrol the area. As heartened as I was to witness such an immediate response, their presence, and that of the poachers of course, almost certainly cost me any chance of even a glimpse of this shy antelope. As disappointed as I was to miss a few of these five species, I still enjoyed excellent views of fourteen of the remaining fifteen antelopes and it is not often that you can return from a single game drive having photographed a dozen different antelope species, which happened to me on more than one occasion on this tour. If I am honest, you begin to take the diversity for granted after a while and I am hoping that it will soon be possible for visitors to observe all of the following species on one unique safari:

The Twenty Antelope Species of Kafue National Park

- 1) Impala (Aepyceros melampus)
- 2) Hartebeest (Alcelaphus buselaphus)
- 3) Yellow-backed Duiker (Cephalophus silvicultor)
- 4) Common Wildebeest (Connochaetes taurinus)
- 5) Roan Antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*)
- 6) Sable Antelope (*Hippotragus niger*)
- 7) Common Waterbuck (Kobus ellipsiprymnus)
- 8) Southern Lechwe (Kobus leche)
- 9) Puku (Kobus vardonii)
- 10) Klipspringer (Oreotragus oreotragus)

- 11) Oribi (Ourebia ourebi)
- 12) Blue Duiker (Philantomba monticola)
- 13) Steenbok (Raphicerus campestris)
- 14) Sharpe's Grysbok (Raphicerus sharpie)
- 15) Southern Reedbuck (Redunca arundinum)
- 16) Common Duiker (Sylvicapra grimmia)
- 17) Common Eland (Tragelaphus oryx)
- 18) Bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*)
- 19) Sitatunga (Tragelaphus spekii)
- 20) Greater Kudu (Tragelaphus strepsiceros)

The only antelope that I was not able to photograph adequately was an eland, as I saw only one throughout the entire tour and she was sadly at considerable distance. No matter, as all of the other species were seen well, including a herd of around 70 sable relaxing on the edge of the pretty Miombo woodland that covers much of the park and literally thousands of lechwe and puku adorning the fertile floodplains of Busanga Plains. As far as buffalo were concerned, I have already mentioned some of my travails with this species and just how difficult they were to find, but I was eventually able to locate a healthy breeding herd down at Lake Itszhi-Tezhi, as well as the old boy pictured below, in just about the best possible evening light.



Order Cetartiodactyla - Family Giraffidae (Giraffes - 0)

There are no giraffes at Kafue and I have included them here largely because African Parks are apparently discussing the possibility of introducing them. Aside from the rather obvious marketing and commercial factors at play, I cannot really see why they would consider introducing a somewhat specialised creature to an area that there is no record of it occupying in recent years, and by recent, I mean within the last three centuries or so. In reality, there are relatively few major reserves with giraffe in either Zambia or neighbouring Zimbabwe and their absence in these areas appears to be a largely natural occurrence, which is in stark contrast to their fate across most of West Africa, where they were clearly extirpated.

Order Cetartiodactyla - Family Hippopotamidae (Hippopotamuses - I)

There is not a great deal that needs to be said regarding the hippos at Kafue, as they occur in large numbers at several destinations, including Busanga Plains and Lake Itszhi-Tezhi, and are often encountered out of the water, particularly at night when they walk long distances to feed. Several of the camps that I stayed at had hippos grazing on the lawn each evening and I would often fall asleep listening to their chomping outside my tent. One even had a resident hippo that used to walk up the lodge steps and sleep in the bar and dining area. Nicknamed Basil, guests would actually walk round him and he became quite a star during the fourteen years that he made the lodge his home. Sadly, nature eventually took its course and Basil was killed by another male defending his territory, but I spoke to many people who knew him and he clearly left an indelible impression on everyone who crossed his amiable path.



Order Cetartiodactyla - Family Suidae (Pigs - 2)

Six members of the pig family occur in Africa, but only two as far south as Zambia, the Warthog and the Bushpig, both of which are found at Kafue. The two basically represent the day and nightshifts, as warthogs are only active during the day and bushpigs are largely nocturnal. If you therefore see them during the day, as opposed to in the early morning, which is not as unusual, it is likely they have been disturbed and that was probably the case with my two sightings on this trip, as each time they were running, once through long grass and once through Miombo woodland with several young in tow. Bushpigs more resemble the red river hog that occurs in central and western Africa than the warthog, at least in terms of its facial marking and, in some cases, even its orange to red coat. Unlike warthogs, both species have small relatively inconspicuous tusks and although they share the same genus and overlap in several areas, there is no evidence of hybridization between the two. Warthogs are of course one of the more commonly observed African mammals, but most tourists do not realise there are now considered to be two distinct warthog species, the common warthog, *Phacochoerus africanus*, and the desert warthog *Phacochoerus aethiopicus*. The former ranges as far north as Niger and as far south as Port Elizabeth in South Africa, whilst the desert variety has a far more restricted range across parts of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. They usually have litters of between two and four, although up to eight is not unheard of, and it always strikes me how often I see just one or two remaining with their parents, as more or less everything eats these tiny piglets and on this trip I disturbed a bateleur eagle feasting on one it had just killed.

Order Perissodactyla - Family Equidae (Zebras - I)

There are three species of zebra in Africa, Plains Zebra, *Equus quagga*, Grevy's Zebra, *Equus grevyi*, and Mountain Zebra, *Equus zebra*. The first is by far the most widespread, ranging as far north as Sudan and as far south as KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Grevy's only occurs in limited areas of Kenya and Ethiopia, whilst Mountain Zebra is only found in South Africa, Namibia, and Iona National Park in Angola, just over the border from Namibia. The more common plains zebra occurs at Kafue and although they are not difficult to observe in several areas, including Busanga Plains, Lake Itszhi-Tezhi and Nanzhila Plains, they equally could not be classified as abundant anywhere. Instead, you sporadically encounter herds of perhaps ten or fifteen at a time and you can clearly see why African Parks have decided that it will be necessary to introduce more of these iconic plains animals in the short-term. Of my own sightings, watching a small group using a variety of termite mounds to scratch and remove ticks was my favourite, as the grooming session turned out to be something of an elaborate ritual, with each of the zebras choosing nests of different heights, depending on what part of the body they wanted to relieve. The entire process continued for beyond an hour and clearly these termite mounds had been used before, as several of them were polished smooth, no doubt by a collection of different animals over the years.

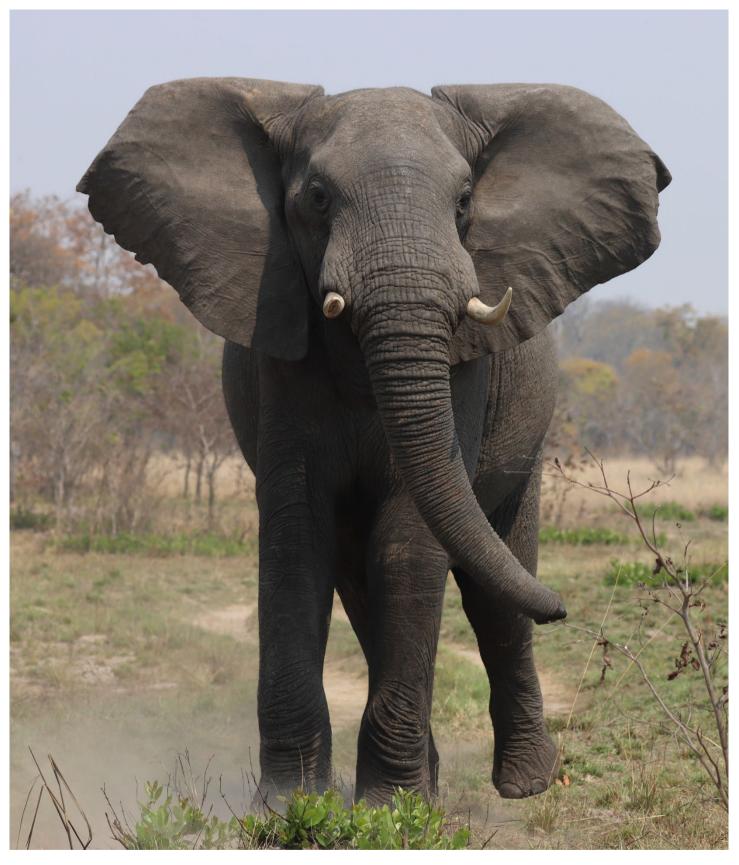


Order Perissodactyla - Family Rhinocerotidae (Rhinoceroses - 0)

Black rhinos were officially declared extinct in Zambia back in 1998, probably several years after the last one had actually been killed by poachers. They have since been reintroduced at North Luangwa National Park with tremendous success, the population there is one of the fastest growing on the continent, and there are plans to introduce more at Kafue, possibly as early as 2025. The park would certainly benefit from the presence of these majestic beasts, as indeed would every African reserve they used to roam in, and at one stage in the 1960s, the Zambia population was estimated at around 12,000. White rhinos, on the other hand, have no historic presence in Zambia, as the Zambezi River was their natural northern boundary and the few that have been introduced at both Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park and Lusaka National Park are living beyond their traditional range.

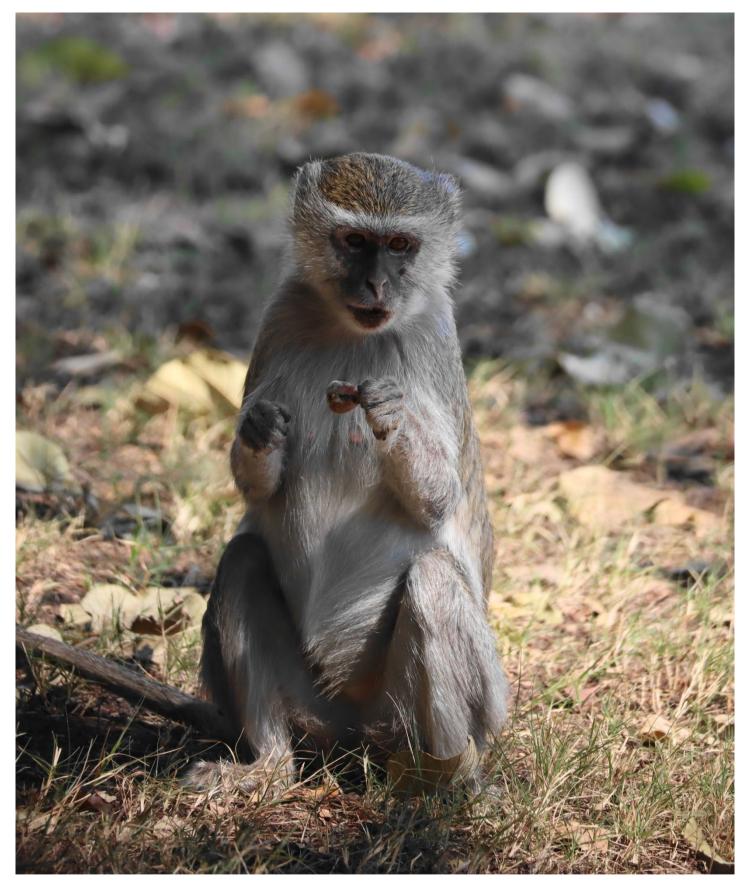
Order Proboscidae - Family Elephantidae (Elephants - I)

The Elephant population is extremely healthy at Kafue, but after years of poaching and human conflict, the animals themselves are exceedingly nervous and will not tolerate the presence of vehicles, particularly, and as you would expect, when they have young. Some of the guides are clearly not helping, as they are more nervous than the actual elephants and often insist on keeping their engines running, just in case they are charged. Although I could see for myself that this is a realistic possibility, as some of the elephants are genuinely fraught, this obviously only exacerbates an already stressful situation and, despite the encouraging numbers, it can be difficult to enjoy a relaxed elephant sighting at Kafue. One guide would not even allow elephants behind his vehicle and I constantly found myself telling guides to drive on, simply to avoid upsetting the elephants any further. I ultimately took the view that I would only watch elephants at distance and always with the engine switched off, which did result in a few nice encounters, generally when they were at water and at their most relaxed. Hopefully as the poaching is phased out and African Parks are able to get on top of the human/wildlife conflict, things will improve, but elephants really do 'never forget' and it is going to take a very long time for them to learn to trust people here after so many years of persecution.



Order Primates - Family Cercopithecidae (Old World Monkeys - 3)

Eight members of the primate family Cercopithecidae occur in Zambia, but only three of these are found at Kafue, Chacma Baboon, Kinda Baboon and Malbrouck Monkey. Technically, and according to its known range, Blue Monkey should also occur here, but none of the sources that I have researched suggest they do and none of the guides who I checked with had ever seen one in the park. The kinda baboon, *Papio kindae*, was previously considered a subspecies of the Yellow Baboon, *Papio cynocephalus*, but it has recently been classified as a distinct species and is the dominant baboon across the majority of the reserve, with the chacma variety only occurring towards the south. Both are routinely observed within their own range and that is also the case regarding the malbrouck monkey, *Chlorocebus cynosures*, which was previously recorded as a subspecies of the Grivet Monkey, *Cercopithecus aethiops*, which in turn was reclassified to the genus *Chlorocebus*. In truth, there is a great deal of debate regarding the classification of these monkeys and several sources continue to insist that the entire genus should be treated as subspecies of one conspecific species. I will leave that to others to determine, but in the field I can tell very little difference between any of the species that I always knew as Vervet Monkeys, either in terms of behaviour or appearance, as regional variations in appearance are incredibly common within conspecific species and cannot be relied upon in terms of classification.



Order Primates - Family Galagidae (Galagos - 2)

The only other primates that occur at Kafue are galagos, or bushbabies in the old parlance. Technically three occur in Zambia, as Thomas's Dwarf Galago has apparently been recorded in the far northeast of the country, but only two are found across most of Zambia and consequently at Kafue. The more common by far is the Southern Lesser Galago, *Galago moholi*, which is regularly encountered in the Miombo woodlands at night. In complete contrast, the Thick-tailed Greater Galago, *Otolemur crassicaudatus*, is almost never seen and I have absolutely no understanding of why not. Only two of the guides who I asked had ever seen one and I did initially guess that perhaps they were not checking properly and just assuming that any eyeshine was of the smaller more common species. However, having made a point of examining the eyeshine of perhaps 50 galagos, I can certainly confirm that none were the significantly larger variety and although I had not remembered this at the time, having since checked, I have only actually encountered this species twice in the last decade. Both occasions were at Lake Mburo National Park in Uganda, where they are extremely common and habitually observed.

Order Tubulidentata - Family Orycteropodidae (Aardvark - I)

Having observed so much evidence of them, the Aardvark was the one animal that I expected to see and missed, particularly after another vehicle encountered two in the same area that I was spotlighting in around Lake Itszhi-Tezhi. Indeed, we encountered so many of their diggings and burrow systems, most of which were fresh and in use, that you feel sightings would become almost a formality if you were allowed to stay out later at night, as these exceedingly shy creatures are traditionally more difficult to see in the early evening. Given that they cover one of the largest areas of any of the African mammals, basically the whole of central and southern Africa and even as far north as the Nubian Desert in northern Sudan, you would perhaps expect them to be observed more, but they are strictly nocturnal across the vast majority of their territory and that makes a real difference in terms of casual sightings. The same applies to pangolins and when I am looking seriously for either, I always try to be in the field until at least 2am the next day. Even this is no guarantee of course, but there are areas in southern Africa where aardvarks are far easier to see and a few lodges have even introduced special activities to search specifically for them.

Order Pholidota - Family Manidae (Pangolins - I)

Of the eight pangolin species that occur worldwide, four occur in Asia, Chinese, Indian, Philippine and Sunda, and four in Africa, Black Bellied, White Bellied, Ground and Giant Ground, of which, only the Ground Pangolin can be found at Kafue. They are as well, as just before my visit, a young couple, new to Africa and experiencing their first ever game drive, encountered a pangolin walking across an open area in broad daylight. It does happen of course, although it would be difficult to somehow explain to that particular pair that their very first drive was as good as it was going to get for them, at least in terms of almost miraculous good fortune. The ground pangolin, which is now more commonly known as temminck's pangolin, has the widest range of all four of the African varieties and can be found as far north as Chad and as far south as the northern parts of South Africa. However, it is absent from large areas in between, including more or less the entire Congo Basin. I had no luck with this elusive species at Kafue and nor did I expect to, but the guides said they are observed from time to time, but again, usually later at night when they are working or travelling between camps and not so much during the early evening game drives with guests.

Order Hyracoidea - Family Procaviidae (Hyraxes - 2)

Although some sources maintain that there are only five hyrax species, Bush Hyrax, Rock Hyrax, Western Tree Hyrax, Eastern Tree Hyrax and Southern Tree Hyrax, most now accept Benin Tree Hyrax, *Dendrohyrax interfluvialis*, as a unique species, now split from the neighbouring western tree hyrax, *Dendrohyrax dorsalis*. At Kafue two species occur, southern tree hyrax and bush hyrax and although I spent a few hours scanning around the lodges at night with my thermal imager, I did not even hear the distinctive vocalisation of the tree hyrax, let alone see one. This is fairly unusual, as this species is notoriously difficult to observe, understandably given the fact that it is both nocturnal and arboreal, but its characteristic scream-like call is a real feature of the African bush and I was surprised not to hear it at all, particularly as its known range includes the entire park. Happily, I had more luck with bush hyrax, as I had noticed some suitable habitat on a walk at one of the lodges and decided that I would sit quietly there for a couple of hours and see what turned up. As it happened, the first bush hyrax appeared within about fifteen minutes and in all I was able to observe maybe ten or so over two visits, although none were completely calm in my presence and would not enable me to approach.



Order Lagomorpha - Family Leporidae (Rabbits and Hares - I)

As I have stated in previous trip reports, I currently identify both the African Savannah Hare, *Lepus victoria*, and the Cape Hare, *Lepus capensis*, based on where they occur, rather than what they look like, as it is almost impossible to differentiate between the two in the field or even from detailed photographs. Although I therefore currently accept the IUCN taxonomic assessments of both of these species, principally for the purpose of consistency, there remains significant ambiguity in terms of which hares occur where and even which should be classified to full species level. I would imagine that these assessments will almost certainly change over time, but for now, and again following the IUCN range details, the situation at Kafue is simple enough, as only the African savannah hare occurs in Zambia. For all the complex science and human controversy surrounding these classifications, thankfully the animals remain the same in the field and I enjoyed some great views of these attractive hares and was pleased to able to take a few nice shots.

Order Macroscelidea - Family Macroscelididae (Elephant Shrews - 2)

This was another easy species to identify, as all of the park sources indicate that only two elephant shrews, or sengis as they are now known, occur at Kafue and there is a significant size discrepancy between the Short-snouted Sengi that I encountered on four occasions and the Four-toed Sengi, which escaped me. None of the sightings were long, indeed I was never able to even take a quick reference shot, but they were all seen well, including one in the early morning by my room and another during an afternoon drive.

Order Rodentia - Family Hystricidae (Old World Porcupines - I)

Having somehow missed a Cape Porcupine on my last tour in Zimbabwe, I was determined to find the largest rodent in Africa this time, particularly as the trip went on and I kept missing them at almost every lodge. Time and time again I heard that other night drives had been successful with this superb rodent and on one occasion a vehicle from the same camp called my guide to let us know that he was sitting watching a porcupine with his guests. Maddeningly, it disappeared into the trees just a few seconds before we arrived and I was left with quill tracks in the sand, but still no porcupine. It looked like it might be two blank tours in a row with what is typically a fairly easy animal to observe in this part of the world, but my perseverance was eventually rewarded and I personally spotted a large and rather splendid porcupine in a clearing on night seventeen, so after almost forty nights searching, if you also include my previous efforts in neighbouring Zimbabwe. I was able to savour an excellent view and take a couple of quick identification shots before it trundled off and although we tried to stay with it for a short distance, the trees were too thick and it quickly disappeared. I would like to say that this somewhat belated sighting finally opened the floodgates with this species and that I saw several more over the last three nights, but the opposite is in fact the case and this would be my only porcupine encounter at Kafue.



Order Rodentia - Family Sciuridae (Squirrels - 2)

Most sources agree that two squirrel species occur at Kafue, Gambian Sun Squirrel, Heliosciurus gambianus, and Smith's Bush Squirrel, Paraxerus cepapi. Whilst I have no reason to doubt this, I would imagine that the sun squirrel probably occurs in very low densities, as Kafue represents the extreme southern boundary of its accepted range and none of the locals I spoke to were aware of its presence here, including the guides. The bush squirrel, on the other hand, was what you could describe as ubiquitous, certainly in the right areas, and was responsible for one of the most interesting sightings of the tour. Two in fact and the first probably led to the second, as I was inside the cab of a vehicle on a transfer drive, when the guide on the outside stopped us because he had seen a massive rock python climbing a tree. It transpired that he had heard a bush squirrel alarm calling as we drove by and when he checked, he instantly saw the python, which, on closer inspection, was at least two and half metres long and possibly three. I had no way of hearing the squirrel from inside the cab, but the alarm call was very obvious when I got out to watch the python and two days later I heard exactly the same call at the lodge just after lunch. You can always tell that a predator is nearby when the squirrels call urgently and this particular male was going absolutely insane on the roof of the dining area. Although no danger was immediately obvious, the calls went on for too long for it to be a false alarm and I therefore began scanning the roof with my binoculars, basically a few inches at a time. After about an hour, during which the squirrel continued to scream and run in all directions, the head of a much smaller python eventually appeared and in time part of its body slowly emerged, although I was never able to see the entire snake. It was there again the next day and although both of the squirrels that have nested in the roof were still fine when I eventually departed, I am not sure if any young that they had were as fortunate.

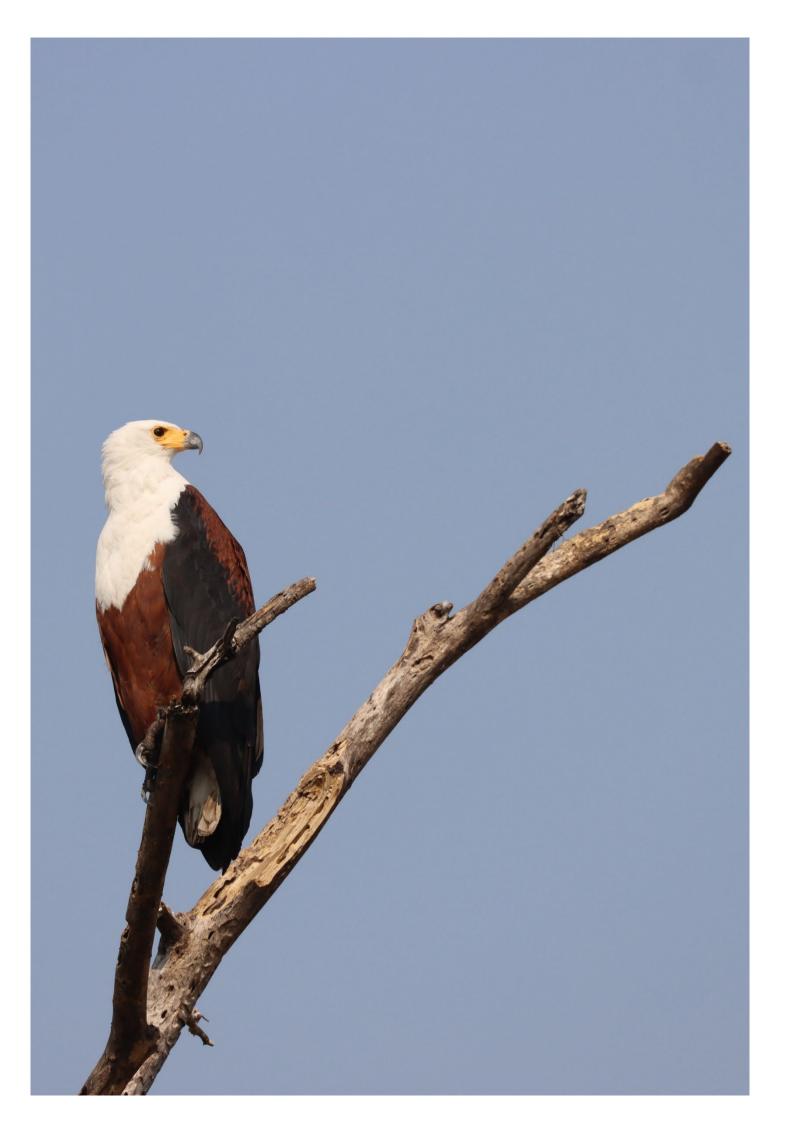


Order Rodentia - Family Anomaluridae (Gliding Anomalures - I)

Although resembling a flying squirrel in regards to the membrane between their front and back legs, which is used in an identical way, anomalures are a distinct family of gliding mammals that only occur in Africa. There were formally seven accepted species, but one of these, the Cameroon scaly-tail, has no gliding adaption and has recently been reclassified as the only member of its own family Zenkerellidae. Lord Derby's Scaly-tailed Squirrel, *Anomalurus derbianus*, is the only species that occurs at Kafue, which I last encountered on my 2019 visit to Odzala-Kokoua National Park in the Republic of the Congo. I had no such good fortune on this trip and none of the guides I checked with were even aware of this animal's existence.

Order Rodentia - Family Pedetidae (Springhares - I)

Historically, the mammal family Pedetidae only had a single member, the springhare, *Pedetes capensis*, but two species are now recognised to include the East African Springhare, *Pedetes surdaster*. The original version is now known as the South African Springhare in most sources and this is the species that occurs in Zambia and across most of southern Africa. I probably do not need to add that springhares are not hares at all or even closely related to them and the name is a strange one considering they more resemble mini kangaroos. They move like them as well and are one of the few animals that it is impossible to mistake for anything else when you see them bouncing around at night. I had a brief view of one within a few metres of my last camp, which I thought was probably going to be my only sighting, that is until my final night drive at Nanzhila Plains, when we encountered perhaps ten within a small area and just a few minutes.



Other Wildlife

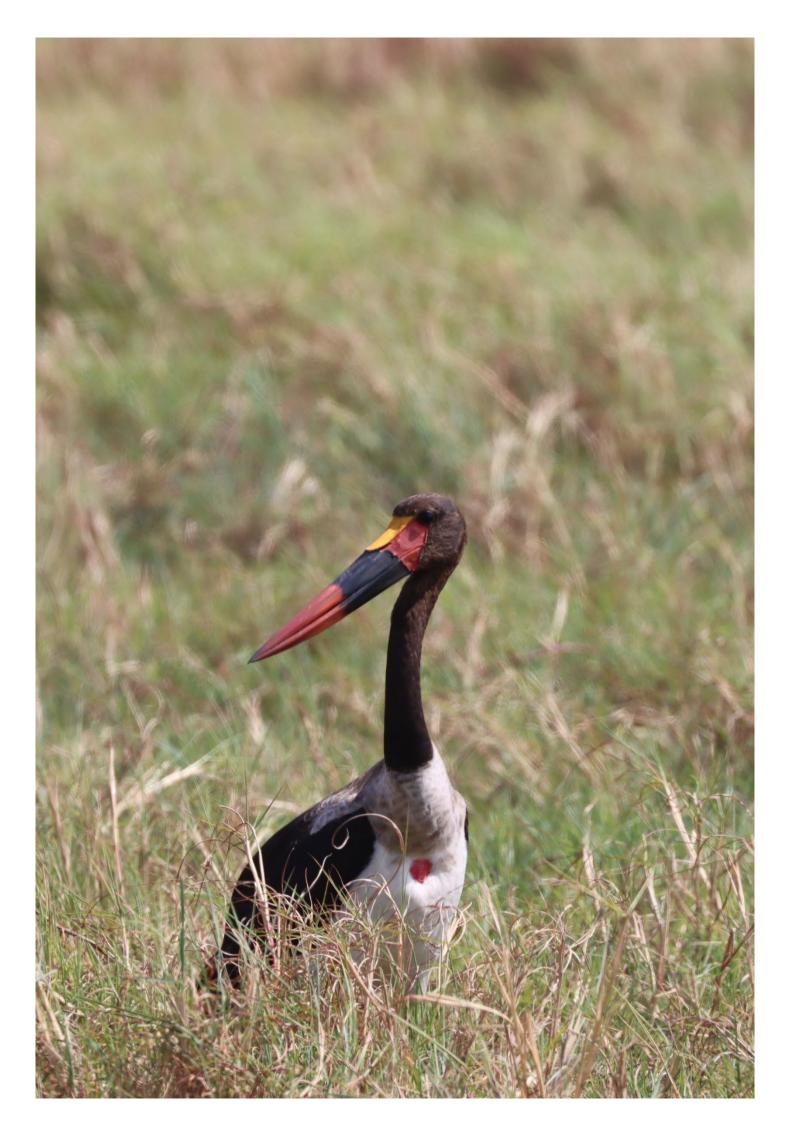
Including the species described here, almost 160 mammals occur at Kafue and apparently 515 different birds have been recorded at this one national park, as well as around 70 reptiles. Although the numbers themselves are certainly impressive for a single reserve, they can never do justice to the astounding array of life already on display here and in time, as the park receives greater protection under the management of African Parks, wildlife densities will match this incredible diversity and sightings will increase. Although I love to see and photograph them, I do not maintain a record of the birds that I come across, but even a rough estimate would probably



produce upwards of 120 different species during my stay, with well over twenty raptors, including four owls, barn owl, marsh owl, African barred owlet and pearl-spotted owlet. As you might expect in terms of a reserve named after the longest river in the country, Kafue is home to a remarkable collection of waterbirds, particularly across the floodplains of Busanga Plains and around Lake Itszhi-Tezhi. Resplendent bee-eaters and rollers are joined on the wing by equally dazzling black-cheeked lovebirds and meyer's parrots and I spent more time than I care to admit trying to photograph my own personal favourite, the African green pigeon, sadly without a great deal of success. Southern ground hornbills are also thriving here and whilst ostrich are absent, I did see one on the transfer in and understand that African Parks are currently planning to introduce them. In addition to literally hundreds of crocodiles, a few of which were almost dinosaur size, and at least a few Nile monitor lizards that have escaped the attention of a rather sneaky leopard at



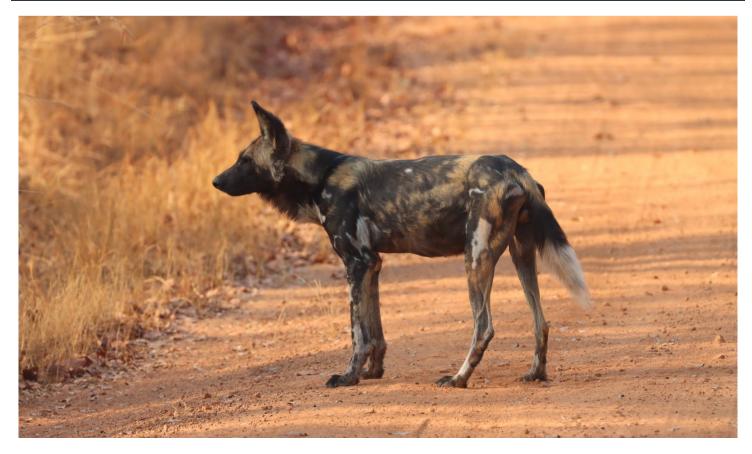
Nanzhila Plains, the reptile highlights were the two pythons already mentioned and a black mamba climbing a tree, presumably to lay in wait for either an unsuspecting squirrel or bird. Although my view was partially obscured through the branches, I could still clearly make out the idiosyncratic 'smile' of what is the largest venomous snake in Africa and probably the most feared. At completely the opposite end of the 'deadly' spectrum were two flap-necked chameleons and a serrated hinged terrapin, which we encountered in the midday heat on an open plain, as it presumably made its way to the nearest water.

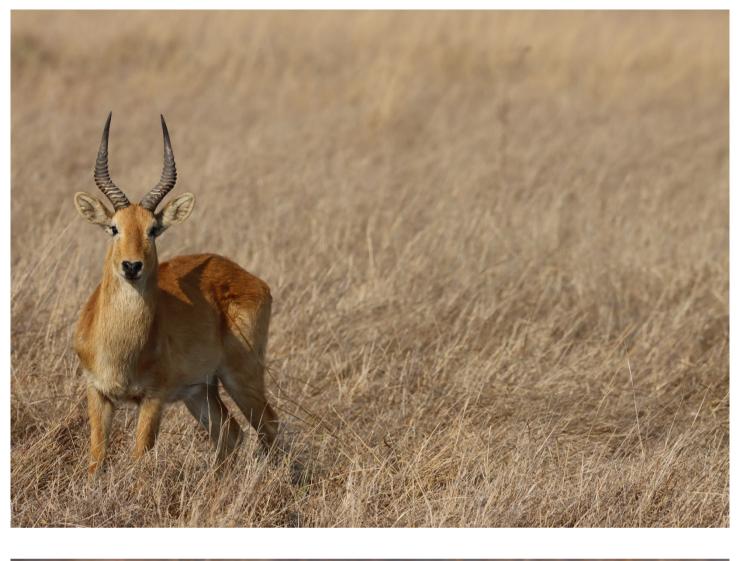




No.	Species	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Lion	Panthera leo	Common at Busanga Plains, but just twelve across two sightings elsewhere.
2	Leopard	Panthera pardus	Eleven in all, including two mothers with cubs of different ages.
3	Cheetah	Acinonyx jubatus	Single encounter with a mother and four subadult male cubs.
4	Serval	Leptailurus serval	Nine individuals, two during the day and seven at night.
5	African Wildcat	Felis lybica	Brief sighting of an individual in long grass.
6	African Wild Dog	Lycaon pictus	Three sightings of eight animals in total.
7	Side-striped Jackal	Canis adustus	Observed in several areas, but not commonly.
8	Spotted Hyena	Crocuta crocuta	Five sightings of six animals, all at night.
9	Honey Badger	Mellivora capensis	Three individuals, two in the morning light and one in camp at night.
10	Slender Mongoose	Herpestes sanguineus	Three brief views, all during the day.
11	White-tailed Mongoose	Ichneumia albicauda	Observed at night in several areas.
12	Banded Mongoose	Mungos mungo	Several sightings, all involving large groups.
13	African Civet	Civettictis civetta	Five individuals at night, all in different areas.
14	Miombo Genet	Genetta angolensis	At least five confirmed sightings.
15	Large-spotted Genet	Genetta maculata	Commonly encountered at night at most destinations.
16	Impala	Aepyceros melampus	Routinely observed, often with puku.
17	Sable Antelope	Hippotragus niger	Several sightings, including a single herd of around 70.
18	Roan Antelope	Hippotragus equinus	Regular views of small herds, one at close quarters.
19	Common Waterbuck	Kobus ellipsiprymnus	One of the most abundant antelopes, particularly at Busanga Plains.
20	Southern Lechwe	Kobus leche	Large herds at Busanga Plains, which is the only area of the park they inhabit.
21	Puku	Kobus vardonii	The most commonly observed antelope at Kafue.
22	Common Wildebeest	Connochaetes taurinus	Observed at both Busanga Plains and Nanzhila Plains.

23	Common Duiker	Sylvicapra grimmia	Encountered irregularly, but at most destinations.
24	Oribi	Ourebia ourebi	Absent in some areas, but where they did occur, they were seen in healthy numbers.
25	Hartebeest	Alcelaphus buselaphus	Encountered reasonably regularly, but never in large numbers.
26	Southern Reedbuck	Redunca arundinum	Common at Busanga Plains and also observed elsewhere.
27	Common Eland	Tragelaphus oryx	One distant view of a lone female.
28	Bushbuck	Tragelaphus scriptus	Another frequently observed antelope species.
29	Greater Kudu	Tragelaphus strepsiceros	One of the more common species, with daily sightings.
30	Sharpe's Grysbok	Raphicerus sharpei	Several individuals and more usually observed at night, when they are easier to find with a spotlight.
31	African Buffalo	Syncerus caffer	One male herd of four in the first nineteen days and several sightings in the last two days at Lake Itszhi-Tezhi.
32	Hippopotamus	Hippopotamus amphibius	Seen in all of the river areas at night and common during the day at Busanga Plains and Lake Itszhi-Tezhi.
33	Common Warthog	Phacochoerus africanus	Observed at every destination, usually in high numbers.
34	Bushpig	Potamochoerus larvatus	Two diurnal observations.
35	Plains Zebra	Equus quagga	Several sightings of generally small herds.
36	African Elephant	Loxodonta africana	Encountered at every destination and in high numbers in several regions.
37	Kinda Baboon	Papio kindae	Routinely encountered north of Lake Itszhi-Tezhi.
38	Chacma Baboon	Papio ursinus	Several observations, south of Lake Itszhi-Tezhi.
39	Malbrouck Monkey	Chlorocebus cynosuros	Commonly observed throughout the park.
40	Southern Lesser Galago	Galago moholi	The most common nocturnal species by far and observed in every area of woodland.
41	Bush Hyrax	Heterohyrax brucei	A colony of around ten at one specific location.
42	African Savannah Hare	Lepus victoriae	Observed in low numbers in several areas.
43	Short-snouted Sengi	Elephantulus brachyrhynchus	Four individuals, all at different locations, and a further sighting by one of my guides.
44	Cape Porcupine	Hystrix africaeaustralis	One sighting in the south of the park at Nanzhila Plains.
45	Smith's Bush Squirrel	Paraxerus cepapi	Frequently encountered at most destinations.
46	South African Springhare	Pedetes capensis	An individual and then a large number in one area at Nanzhila Plains, all at night.

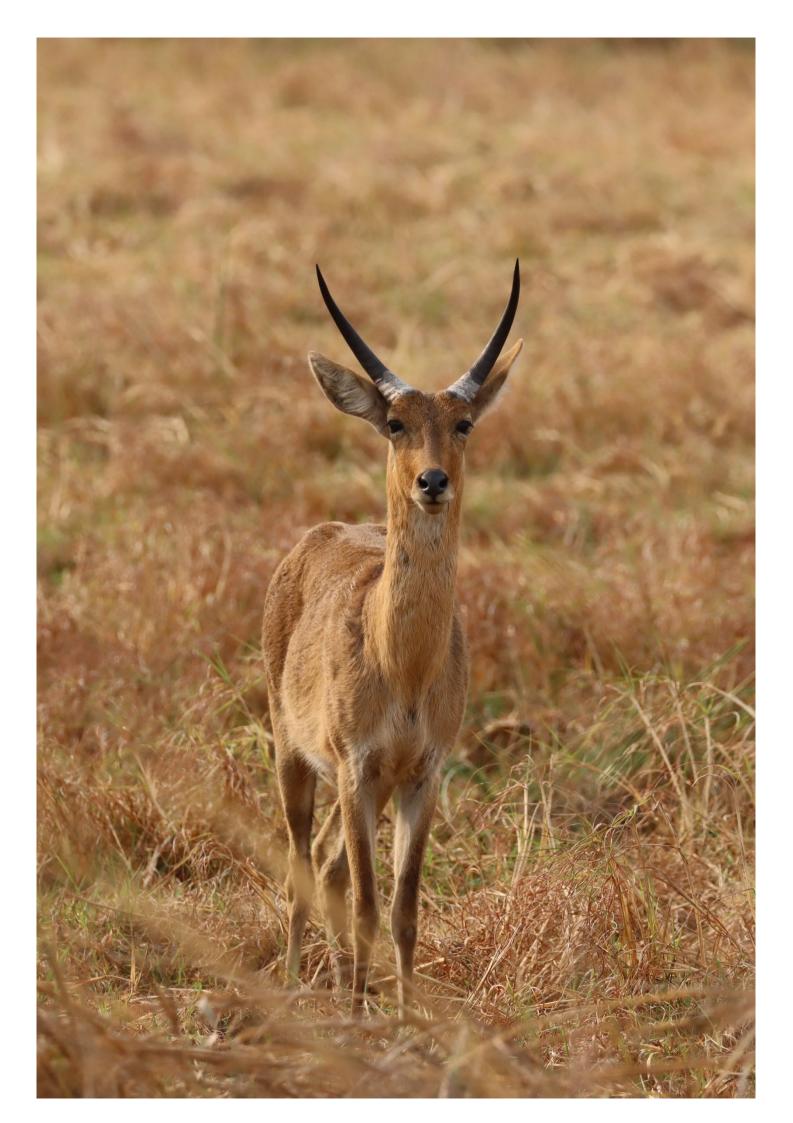


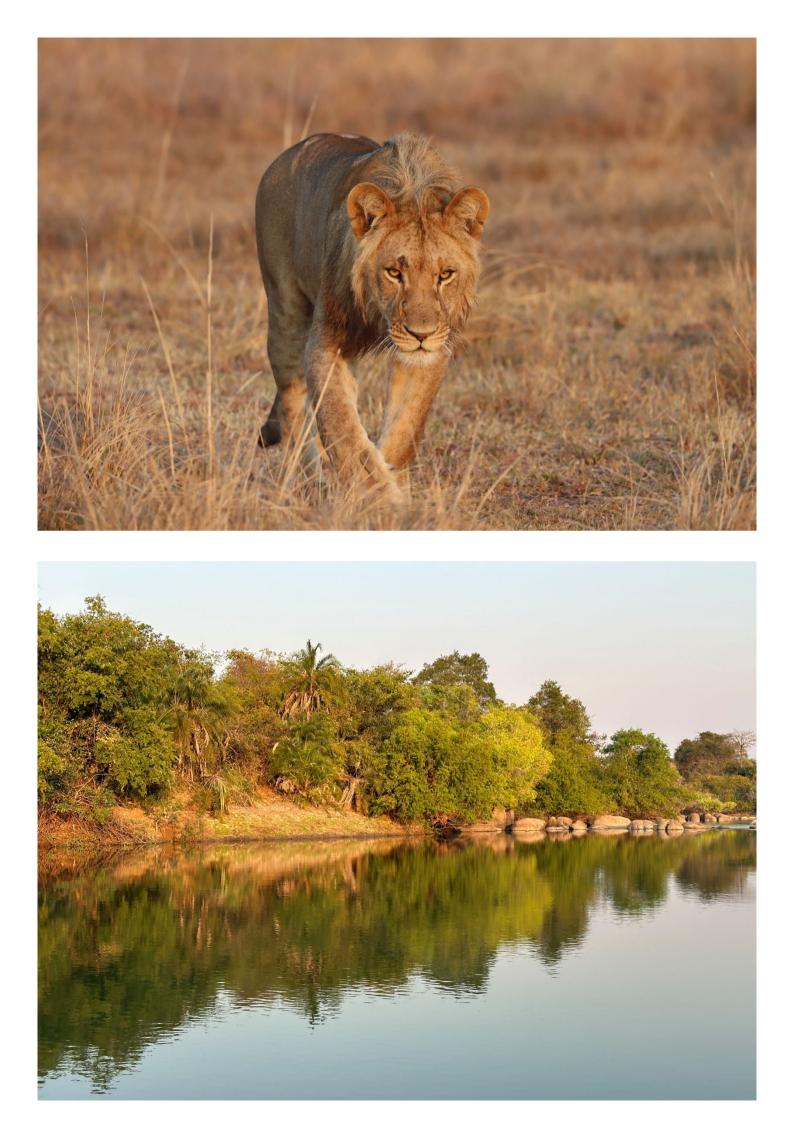




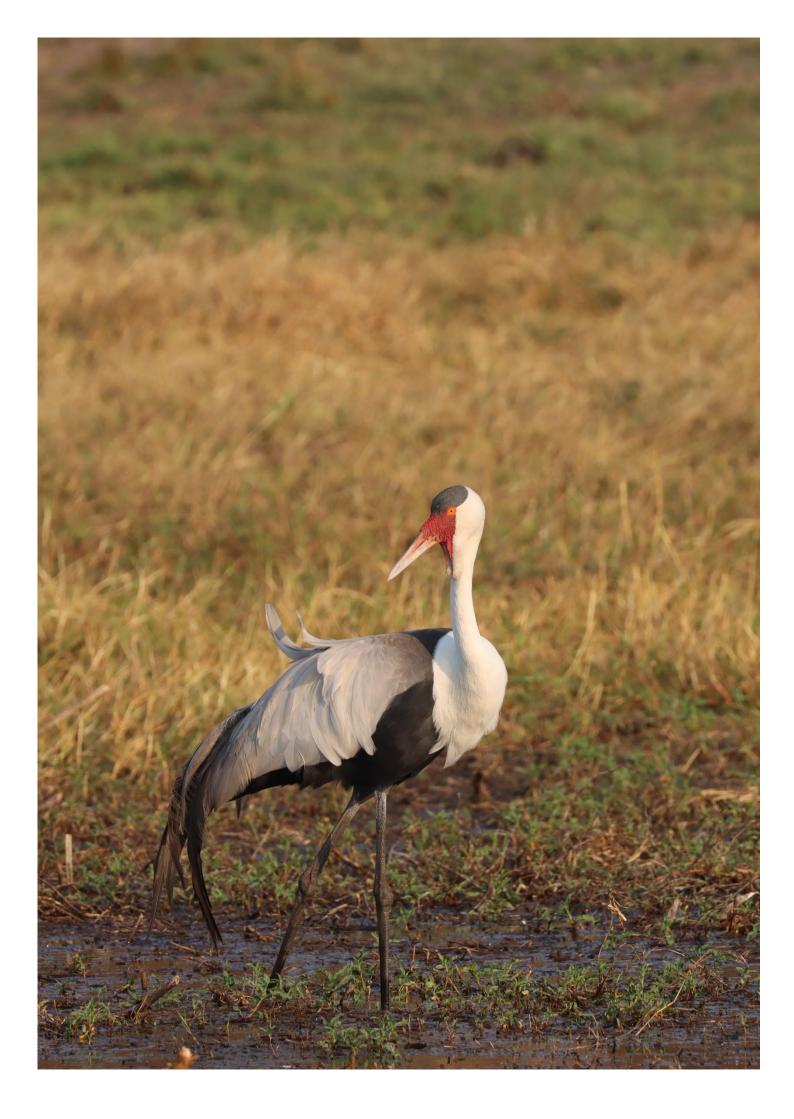










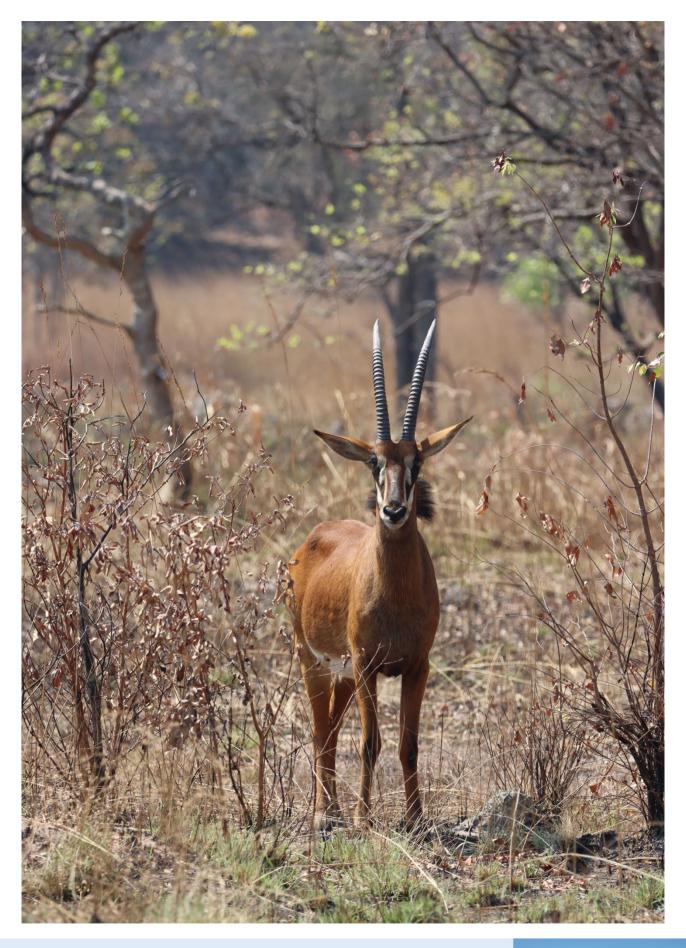












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