

Leopard Evades Attack by Nile Crocodile

A young female Leopard was drinking at Oppy Dam in the late afternoon (7/96). A large Nile Crocodile suddenly lunged out at the unsuspecting cat and, in a blur of action, appeared to snap it on the paw. In a lightning-fast reaction, the leopard reared back, out of the reptile's reach, and retreated several metres. Here it held up its seemingly limp paw which it licked periodically for just about half an hour. Although there was no sign of blood, it appeared as though her foot might have been broken and we feared the worst.

Then, just as it was getting dark, a small herd of Impala came down to the water's edge to quench their thirst. To our complete astonishment, the leopard - not detected by the antelope in the poor light - burst out and pulled down an Impala about 20m from the water. She was clearly not too badly wounded, and proceeded to drag off her kill.

Hugh Marshall and Julie Holl

Leopard Cubs 'Saved' by Elephant

Two nine month old Leopard cubs were drinking at Hennie's Pan at 17h30 when seven Buffalo bulls arrived to quench their thirst. The Buffalo immediately pursued the Leopard which darted off, and clambered up a small tree. One of the buffalo was particularly aggressive, however, and began pushing and shaking the spindly tree with the boss of its horns.

Just when it looked as though one of the cubs might be dislodged, two elephant bulls appeared on the scene and proceeded to chase away the buffalo, inadvertently allowing the cubs to escape.

Dyke Khoza

Interesting Mammal Observations at Ngala

A female Leopard was seen playing with a Black Mamba of over 2m on a sand track. The leopard swatted the snake repeatedly and easily avoided its strikes by leaping back out of reach. After ten minutes of combat, a second vehicle arrived at the scene which caused the leopard to back off, and allowed the snake to escape its tormentor (CR:5/98).

A Slender Mongoose chased a Twig Snake up a small tree, pursuing it to a height of over 2m. The distressed snake had inflated its neck in a bid to intimidate the mongoose, but had been bitten behind the head and was bleeding. The mongoose retreated when we approached, allowing the snake to escape (CR:9/98). Another Slender Mongoose was seen in combat with a Snouted (Egyptian) Cobra, which it eventually killed after 30 minutes, and then ate (KP:3/98).

A Small-spotted Genet was watched as it sneaked up on and killed a roosting Crested Francolin (DK:6/98). Not known for its arboreal prowess, an African Civet was observed climbing about 2m up a Mopane tree, although no potential prey could be detected (AvH:4/98).

A White Rhinoceros bull uttered a very strange, high-pitched squeaking call at intervals for over two hours, as it accompanied an adult female and its two month old calf. The obviously anxious bull appeared to be trying to prevent the mother and calf from moving away but no aggression was observed (CR:7/98).

An adult Aardvark was seen digging to a depth of about 2m into the sandy riverbed of the Timbavati. This insectivorous mammal is not known to drink water but indications were that it may indeed have been seeking moisture (CR:5/98).

Contributions by Chris Roche (CR), Dyke Khoza (DK), Alex van den Heever (AvH) and Kevin Petzer (KP).

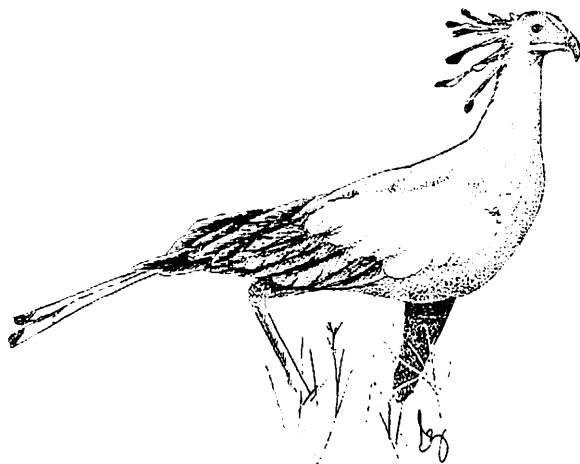


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There is not a sprig of grass that shoots uninteresting to me.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)
American President

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