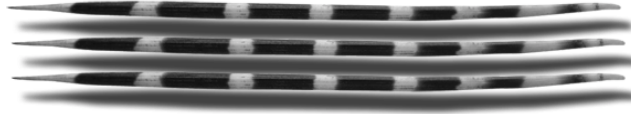


# Makalali

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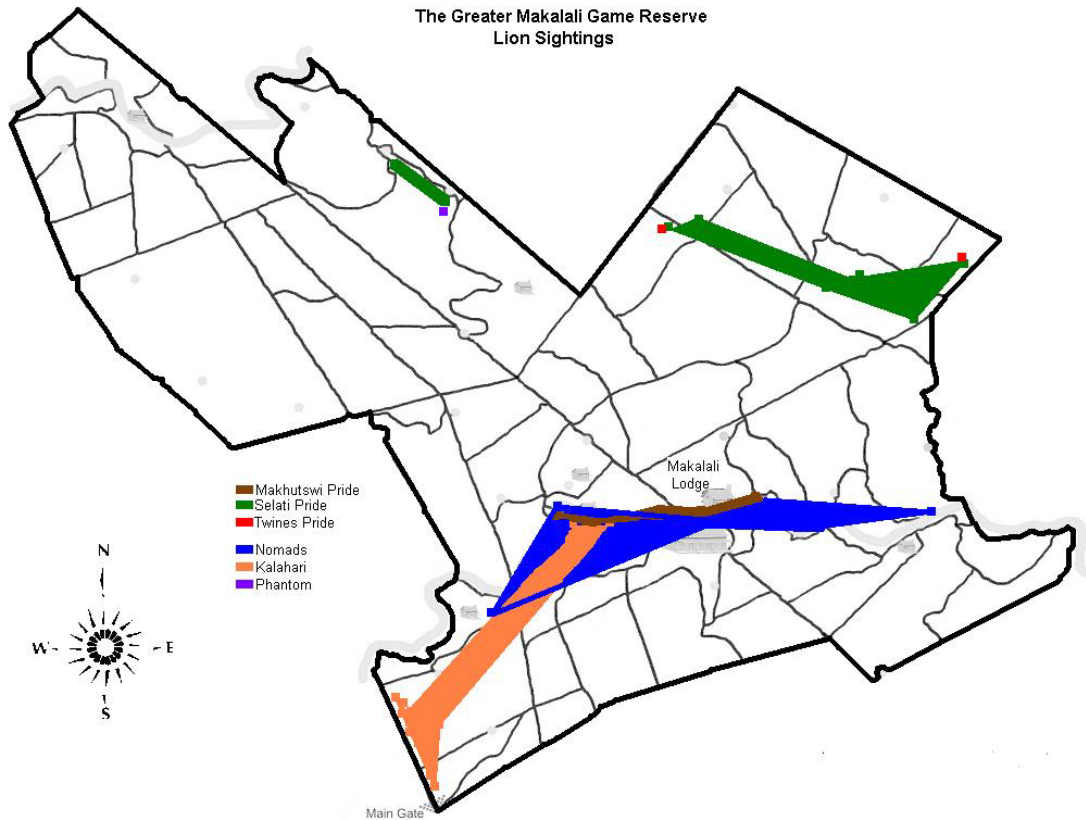
## Game Report

**August-September 2008**

*The Makalali Lodge Game Report is an accurate account of the sightings observed from the Game Drive Vehicles for the month. It is a tool that is used to follow trends and establish movements and territories for the various prevalent species. It is in now way an account of the total species composition of the property and their positions, for the data is attained from sightings alone and only includes a selection of the total species present on the reserve. Where species have identifications, these have been included to allow any reader and us the opportunity to follow the trends of these specific animals over time.*

# LIONS (*Panthera leo*)

[42 Sightings]



## Lion Prides

### Makhutswi Pride

[9 Sightings]

2 Adult Females (11 years, 10 months)

1 Adult Female (6 years, 6 months)



With the lack of sightings of the three remaining cubs of the Makhutswi Pride, it can only be assumed that they are no more. No evidence points to the incident that led to their demise, and we are left without closure. It is quite a surprise and saddening that this should occur, for they were over a year of age and their survival was predictably good. The adult females carry on regardless, and will soon have new litters to fill the void. They have been spending the majority of their time associated with

the Nomads along the river, which in these dry times is providing for an endless source of food. On one occasion they were seen consuming a zebra in the riverbed, which took the good part of three days to finish. About five days later, they made another kill not too far from the first.



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The sounds of an arch-enemy battle echoed down the river as a pack of hyena attacked the lions and eventually managed to get the upper hand at which point all was quiet. An eerie silence ensued for about 30sec after which the insects started up their nightly mate attraction calls as though nothing had happened.

### **Twines Pride**

*[2 Sighting]*

1 Adult Female (4 years, 2 months)

1 male cub (1 year, 8 month)

A new association of lions has been spending time in the northeastern parts of the reserve. Of the four, there is a young male that is of the size and age of the young male cub of the Twines Pride. Where his mother is, is still a mystery, but tracks indicate that she is spending her time in the central eastern areas. Although no sightings of her have been attained, a solitary lioness in this familiar ground to the Twines pride can easily be assumed to be her.

### **Selati Pride**

*[6 Sighting]*

2 Adult Females (7 years, 3 month)

2 Sub-adult Female (2 years, 4 month)

1 Sub-adult Male (2 years, 4 month)

1 Sub-adult Female (3 years, 3 month) [Formerly with Nomads]

6 cubs (8 months)

The pride is still split between the breeding adults and the young and restless teenagers. A mating episode was witnessed in the north with one of the females and Phantom. With little disturbance and a huge tract of land to their own devices, this pride is sure to increase dramatically in number in the near future, putting more and more pressure on the prey species in the area as they strive to keep the pride fed. A sub-adult male and 2 young females were spotted in the eastern parts of the reserve. An area that is extremely dry, but still supporting a number of prey species to keep them fed.



The other prides will not be interested in this area at this stage as both the Selati and Makhutswi Rivers are offering higher game numbers and easier pickings. This therefore creates a relatively safe area for these lions to “hang out”.

## **Male Lions**

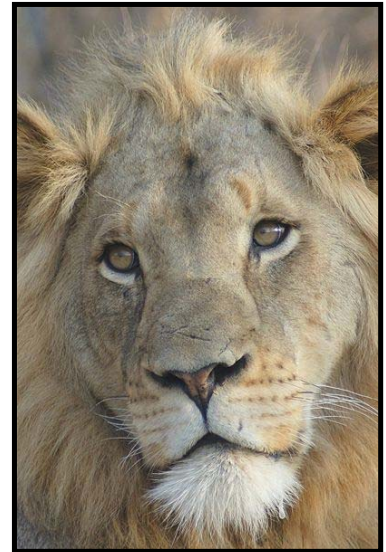
### **Nomads**

*[12 Sightings]*

3 Adult Males (3 years, 3 month)



The Nomads spent all their time patrolling and protecting their prized territory against any would be invaders. On one occasion, Kalahari ventured eastwards, which was a little too close for comfort, sending the Nomads straight into the area to verbally push him westwards again. This was achieved with a symphony of



roars that would send any lone lion running. Unfortunately, their inevitable territory spread makes them a threat to the genetic diversity on the property, and a management decision has been taken to replace them with other males to prevent inbreeding. They will be finding a new home soon in KwaZulu Natal in a newly formed game reserve together with two females from the north. We will miss their roars and fantastic photographic opportunities that they gave us, and look forward to welcome some new blood into the system.

### **Kalahari**

*[18 Sightings]*

1 Adult Male (3 years, 6 months)

Kalahari is comically spending most of his time as far from the Nomads as he possibly can, seen on the majority of occasions right on the reserves western fence-line. On one occasion he gained a little confidence and ventured eastwards, just to be chased back. With the Nomads being removed from the property, he will be able to spread his wings a bit and change his scenery.



### **Phantom**

*[1 Sightings]*

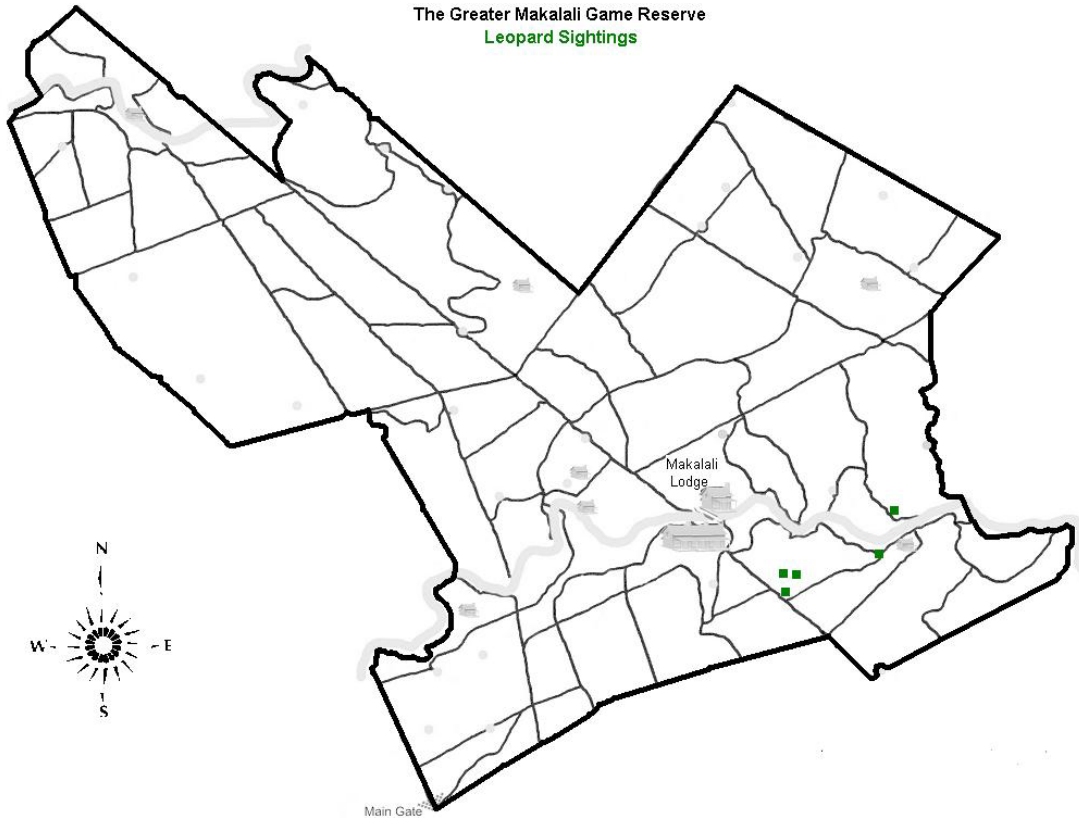
1 Adult Male (+- 5 years, 4 month)

Phantom keeps a very low profile, but when he makes an appearance, he does it in style. On this occasion, he was found mating with one of the Selati Pride and gave observers a very unique lion sighting. This provided a number of fantastic photographic opportunities of this majestic male.



# LEOPARDS (*Panthera pardus*)

[5 Sightings]

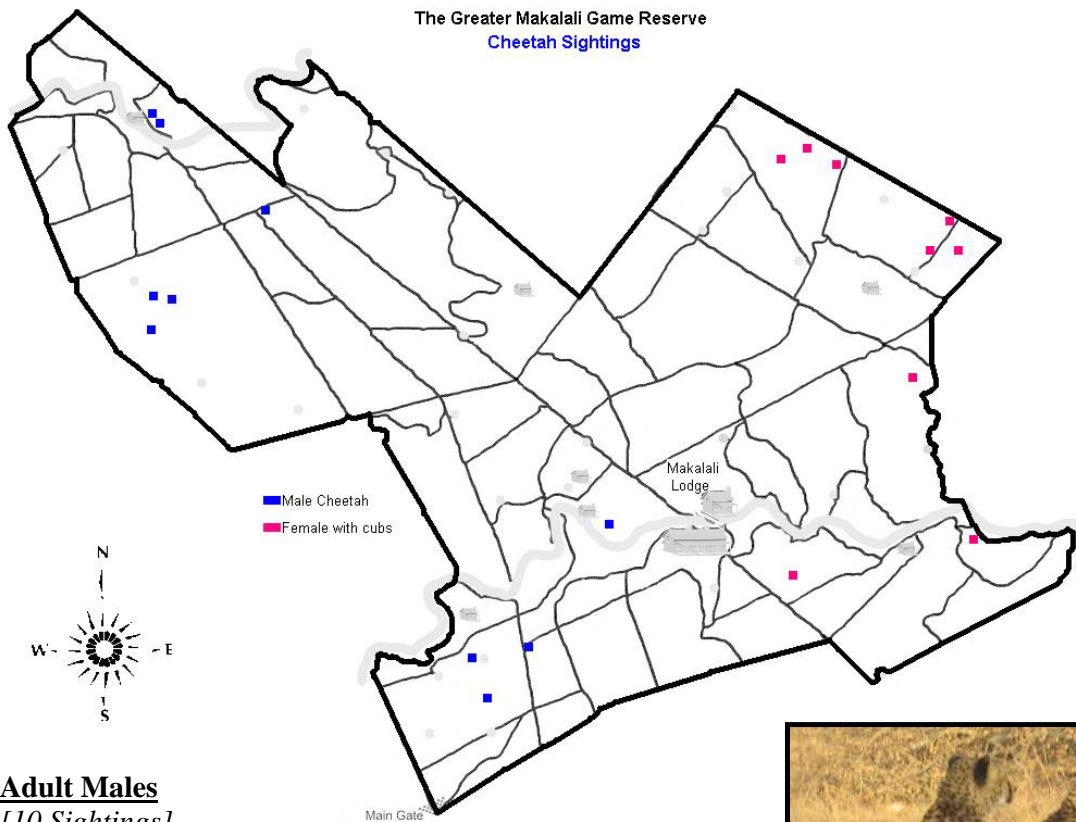


The leopard population have gone into hiding, to the frustration of the trackers who put in hours of tracking to be foiled as tracks are lost in rocky areas. Always a special event and one that will never be forgotten, is seeing a leopard in the wild. A number of these sightings were achieved through the game report period. Individuals seen here were an adult female, an adult male, a sub-adult male and a sub-adult female. All of these animals are extremely relaxed with the vehicles, often coming quite close!



# CHEETAH (*Acinonyx jubatus*)

[19 Sightings]



## Adult Males

[10 Sightings]

Our two old boys are fighting till the end. They are still hunting efficiently, although at one stage there was a concern with their deteriorating conditions. They have bounced back after about three days of lethargy and are back on their western hunting route.



## Female & Cubs

[9 Sightings]



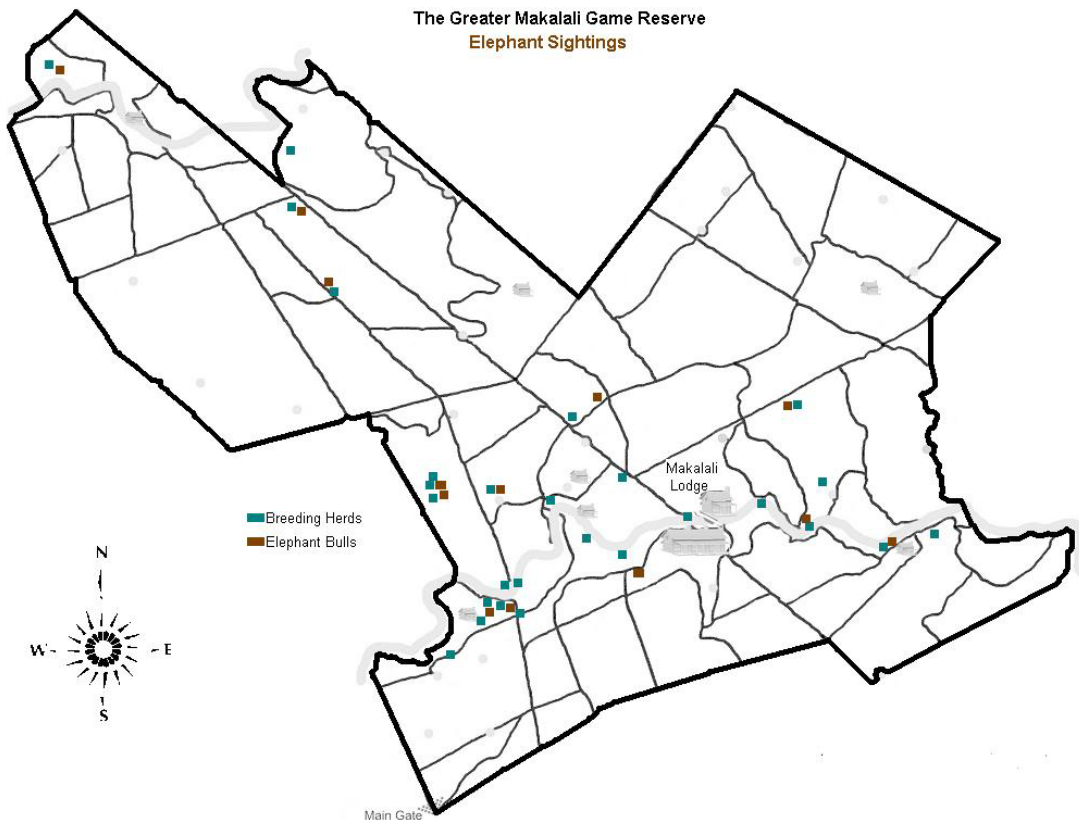
The female and 3 cubs that have been observed over the last couple of months, have opted to stay clear of the two males. This behaviour can clearly be seen on the distribution map. They were seen on one occasion having killed a kudu cow, being harassed by a leopard, but standing their ground and chasing the leopard off. It is unbelievable how quickly animals can become conditioned to vehicles.

When we first saw them when the cubs were small, they were running scared. It took about 4 months to slowly get them accustomed to the vehicles, and now they are totally relaxed, hardly battering and eye at a vehicles approach.



# ELEPHANT (*Loxodonta Africana*)

[31 Sightings]



the Knobthorns and Marulas, which are killed in the process if the elephants strip the bark around the entire tree. As the first leaves started to appear on the trees along the river, they have



been pushing them over to get to the new growth, this also a means of supplying other animals with desperately needed nutrients that they would not have been able to attain by their own devices. Both these destructive activities are very evident due to the harshness of the winter that we have experiences, but is all part of the natural cycle of the system, which in a couple of good years will recover.



# **RHINO** (*Ceratotherium simum*)

[22 Sightings]



The rhino's too are staying close to the water sources on the property. Reports of a new calf have come down from the north, taking our total count to 11 on the property. No pics or sightings from our side have been attained yet, but will feature as soon as they are attained. From all of us though, we would like to welcome our newest member to the Makalali family.



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