

## **An Extra Snack?**

An adult Lioness and three young male Lions killed a Giraffe during the night. The carcass could be seen from the lodge, and vehicles were driven down to see the Lions.

In the afternoon, while trying to find the pride again, a group came across the body of a Banded Mongoose near the carcass. The mongoose had been killed by one of the Lions during the day and although it had been disembowelled, nothing had been eaten.

*Victor Nkosi & Alfred Mmlambo*

## **Rhino Skin Too Thick**

A young White Rhino bull, aged 5-6 years, was found stuck in a deep mud wallow in September. His front horn had somehow become wedged in the side of the wallow, and the rhino had died. The carcass was only found a few days after he had died with the Bongani Lion pride lying around the wallow. Almost nothing had been eaten, which was strange. We then we saw one of the Lions try to open the carcass, but the skin was too thick. They eventually gave up and moved off.

*December Mbuyane & Mishak Nyawo*

## **Emerald Cuckoo and Wryneck**

A male Emerald Cuckoo was recorded for the first time at Bongani when it was seen in the grounds of the lodge during December (VN) and at the bush dinner site in January (DM). A pair of Red-throated Wryneck was observed foraging on the road to Matsulu Gate (CR); this species has only been recorded a few times at Numbi Gate in Kruger, and this is the first record for Bongani. It doesn't appear as if the Emerald Cuckoo has been recorded in the Kruger Park before.

*Victor Nkosi, December Mbuyane & Chris Roche*

## **Buffalo's Agony**

At around 6h45 one morning, an old Buffalo bull was discovered taking refuge from a pride of three young male Lions and an adult Lioness in the middle of a small dam. Both the Lions and the Buffalo were obviously exhausted, and the stalemate had clearly been going on for some time. The testicles of the Buffalo were badly bitten, and it was bleeding from this wound. The Buffalo ran from the water and tried to escape the Lions, which were too fast and quickly leapt onto its back. Eventually throwing them off, the Buffalo made it back to the sanctuary of the water where it stood breathing heavily. At this point my guests decided to continue with the drive, returning a few hours later at about 11h00. The Buffalo was again seen trying to leave the water, but this time the lions would not be thrown off. One of the Lions deliberately attacked the testicles again, which caused anguished bellowing from the Buffalo. After what had amounted to more than six hours of struggle, they eventually overcame the bull.

*December Mbuyane*

## **Marulas and Caterpillars**

Marula Tent Caterpillars (Lasiocampidae) overwhelmed the majority of Marula trees on the mountain behind Bongani Lodge. The trees lost their leaves and stopped producing fruit, until after the rains came and washed the silk away; whereupon the trees started to put out leaves and even flowered again but did not produce fruit.

*Constance Nyundu*

