



Favorite Moments from our September 2016 Safaris

Description

Though there is no hiding the stress of the long drought on the animals and plant life of the bushveld, we had excellent wildlife sightings. The predators thrive during these conditions with so many herbivores loosing condition to lack of food. There was hope in the first good early rains. We enjoyed the cooler than average temperatures and watched the drama of nature unfold. These are some of ours guests and my own favorite moments from our recent 3 safari groups.

I use a Canon 5D MKIII and most of my images are shot using a 70 - 200mm lens

I have now upgraded to the Canon 5D 4 and look forward to its first trip to Af

Unusual Sightings

Martial Eagle Makes a Large Kill



Martial eagle has made a kill

Most of our large raptor sightings are of the bird of prey scouting from the top of a tree or involved in a crowd of birds on a scavenged carcass. The eagle was able to take down a steenbok. The bird plummeted with enough force to knock the weakened antelope to the ground then held it in a choke hold.



A small steenbok can fall victim to a skilled raptor

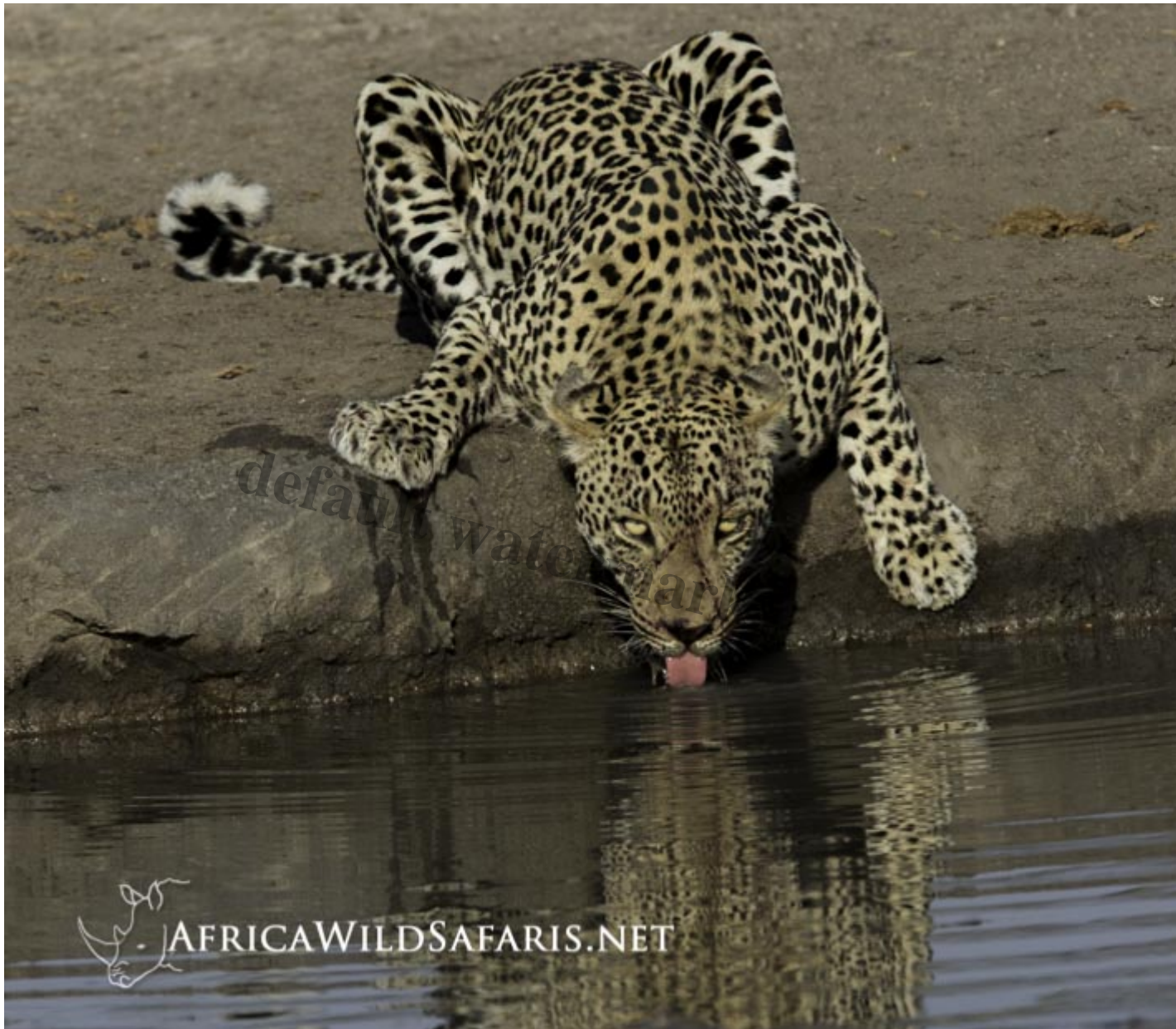
Following a Leopard on His Rounds

In the early evening we tracked a leopard as he surveyed his territory and looked for hunting opportunities—and took a nap

Our trackers knew where to look for this male and we found him early in our game drive. He is a very robust male who has obviously had success hunting lately. We had a wonderful time seeing the daily life of this predator.

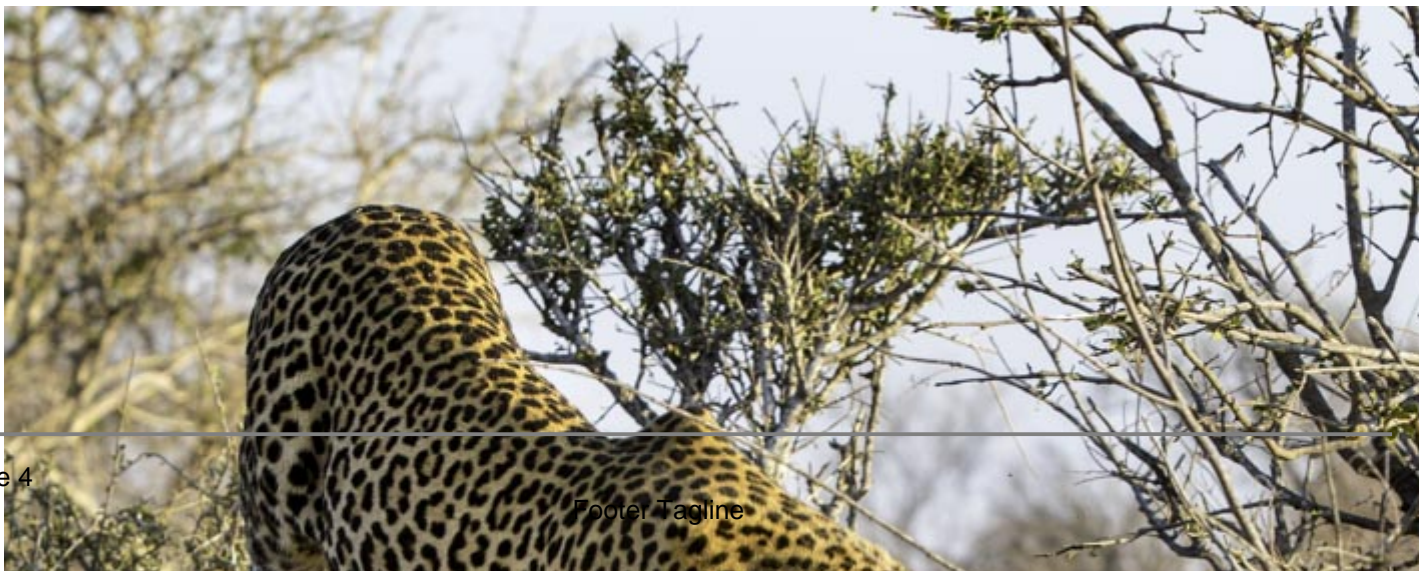


A male leopard starts out in the late afternoon on a hunt



He pauses to get a good drink.

Leopards love warthogs and this one spent some time checking likely dens while listening and watching for some to return for the night.



checking for warthogs in a hole



he pauses in a comfortable spot to take a short nap

It is possible this leopard has a recent kill stashed up a tree (his stomach does look a bit big) and thus he is only surveying territory tonight and hunting only what is easy to get.

See more of my Safari Reports from 2016

[May 2016](#)

[September 2017](#)

Seeing Spotted Hyena's Family Life

Most times we see hyenas at the kills made by lions, or harassing a cheetah. We had a chance to see a more sympathetic side of hyenas at a den sight with multiple pups.



Hyena scavenge at a giraffe carcass after the lions have abandoned it



The dominant hyena takes care of one her pups at the den

The den had several cute puppies and the dominant female (mother) was very attentive and affectionate to them. The usual subadult den assistants were also there keeping the bold puppies close.

Photographing Lions

Seeing and photographing lions is always a thrill. We have seen many different lion kills and pride groupings this year. Observing the social dynamics of the group at feeding times is very revealing. The physical demands of eating a carcass is surprising as is the effort put into guarding the meal from vultures and scavengers even after all the lions are so full they can hardly move. We can get very close and see every detail for different positions.



A female lion has brought her cubs to the kill for a meal

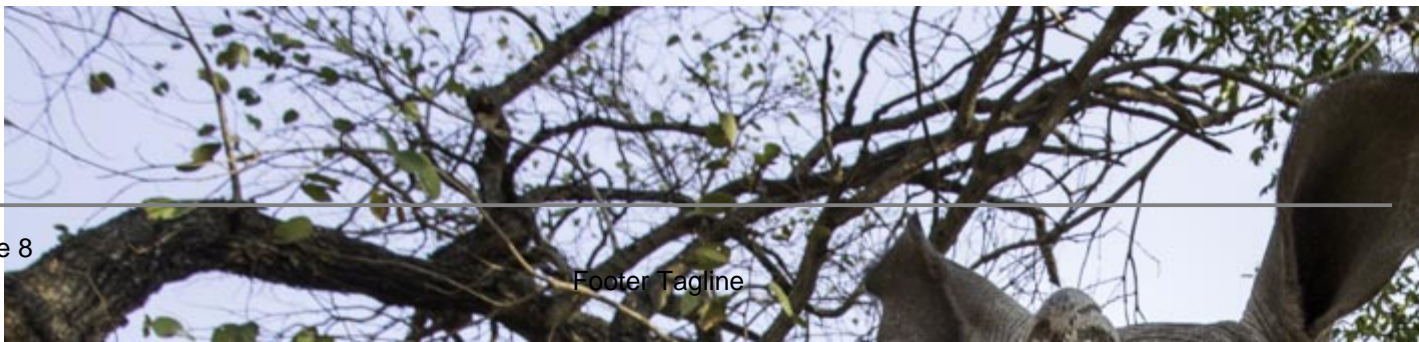


We are able to get really close to predators

Learning about Conservation Efforts

We are lucky to have many wildlife conservation and rehabilitation centres near our lodge.

It is always an educational experience for first time guests and repeat visitors like myself. We visited an orphaned baby rhino, the raptors recovering from poisoning, and other permanent and temporary species.



Our rehab centres take in rhinos orphaned through poaching. They have caretakers with them constantly being a rhino and to make them feel safe.



Vultures who have fallen victim to poison carcasses are rehabilitated at local centre

Great Wildlife Moments at the Lodges

Often we don't have to leave the lodge to have great wildlife encounters: it is all around us. The night skies are magnificent in the near total darkness and the sounds are exotic.

One hot afternoon our guests were relaxing in the pool when giraffes came to eat buds off their favorite trees.



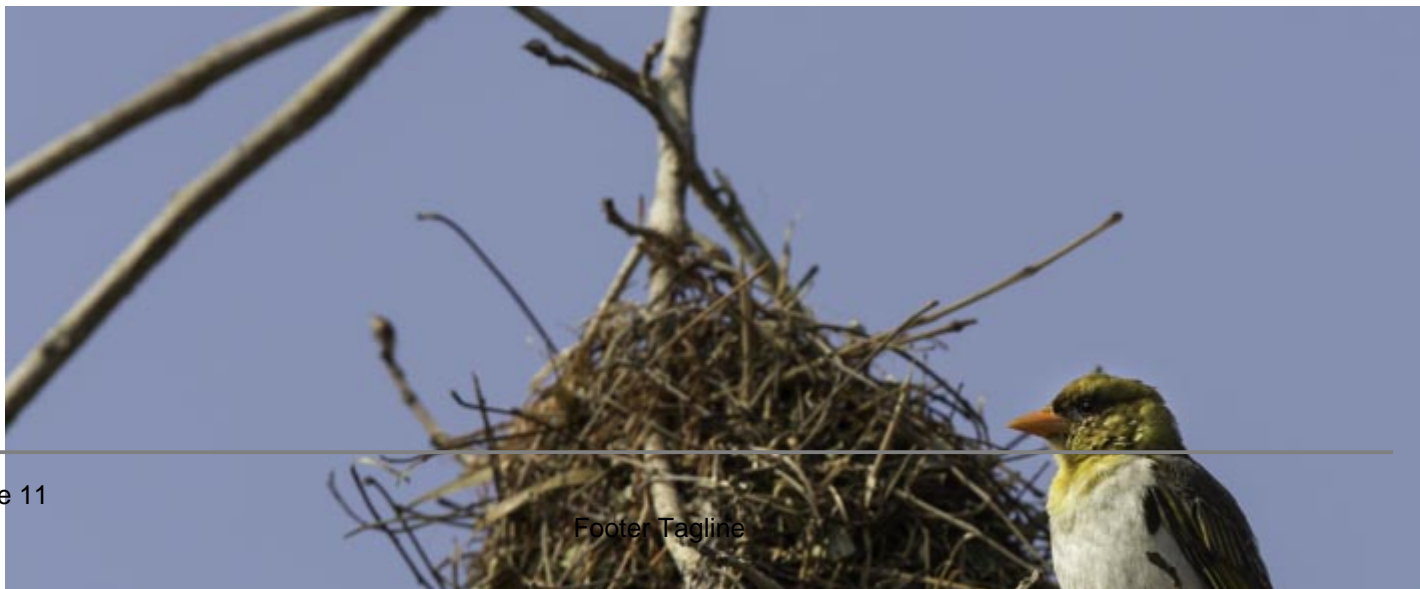
Giraffes continue to feed on budding trees while guests enjoy the pool



One fine afternoon at the tree house lodge enjoying a drink and a cool dip with the giraffes so close



A male builds the round hanging nest in a day



The female inspects the completed nest

Our safaris are full of wildlife which will thrill photographers and those without fancy cameras. We also believe that all the wildlife needs to be presented within a context of current conservation efforts, successes, and challenges. We celebrate and appreciate each species of bird, insect, plant, and animal for its role in the whole ecosystem of our corner of South Africa.

Our safaris are educational, fun, exciting, surprising, and fulfilling â€” and some say life-changing.

Category

1. The Safari Experience

Tags

1. big cat photo safari
2. Photo safari in South Africa
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4. Small group photo safari

Date Created

November 20, 2016

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