

Singita Grumeti

Sasakwa & Faru Faru Lodges
Serengeti House & Sabora Tented Camp
Explore Mobile Tented Camp
Tanzania

Singita



(Photo by Ryan Schmitt)

Wildlife Report

For the month of May, Two Thousand and Fourteen

Temperature and Wind

Average maximum 32.8 °C

Average minimum 14.2 °C

Average wind speed 0.4 m/s

Rainfall Recorded

Sasakwa 32.4

Sabora 104

Faru Faru 37

Samaki 144

Risiriba 58

May at Singita Grumeti was flanked in contradictions and unpredictability. The month began amidst a very dry rainy season, and another seasonal phenomenon was reaching our 350 000 acre property's doorstep more than a month earlier than it was 'supposed' to:

We weren't expecting you yet

Photos by Ryan Schmitt

Meugh... meeuughhh... that inevitable sound that can only mean one thing - the Serengeti Great Migration has arrived at Singita Grumeti. Except it wasn't June yet. It wasn't mid-June yet. Mid-June would be in six weeks time!



The 2014 'long rains' saw little rain at Singita Grumeti, but while our location in the north-western Serengeti had very little rain, the central Serengeti saw almost none. The result of the lack of rain was a lack of suitable grasses, and when the wildebeest left Ndutu in the southern Serengeti at the end of March, the 80 kilometre migration to Singita Grumeti, which usually takes about two and half to three months, took only one month. By the 1st of May, our Ikorongo Game Reserve was full of at least 50 000 wildebeest. Within the next two days, wildebeest in the hundreds of thousands engulfed Singita Grumeti. The great migration had arrived.



By the end of the month the herds started forming long lines marching east and out of the reserve. Only time will tell what their next move will be.

Cub update

The newest cubs in the Butamtam Pride that we reported first seeing in the March journal are continuing to thrive. They have grown a lot but are still small bundles of fur and fun! Their confidence has grown as well.



(Photo by Joe Kibwe)

In April we spotted them with their moms, in what was clearly the first time they were introduced to the rest of their pride. The lionesses and eight one-year-old juveniles were busy eating a recent eland kill, and resting in the heat of the day. The little cubs weren't happy about their extended family at first, clearly frightened by the new environment and the new creatures in it. They meowed and yipped at their mom, running away from the rest of the pride into the long grass.



(Photo by Joe Kibwe)

Now they are completely a part of the pride, quite comfortable with all of the other lions. They have also become more comfortable with the safari vehicles which they were very weary of when we spotted them for the first time with their moms, back in March.



(Photo by Ryan Schmitt)

Verreaux's giant eagle owl

(Photos by Joe Kibwe)

There is almost no one who doesn't love owls! The flat face and big eyes of these majestic night-dwellers is a characteristic unlike any other bird, and gives them a wise and mysterious look.

The most common owl that we see at Singita Grumeti is the Verreaux's giant eagle owl (*Bubo lacteus*). This is partially as a result of its large size (it's the largest owl in Africa) and the fact that it is active during light hours of early morning and late afternoon, as is the case in this photo.

Even when it is not active during the day, it is often exposed by smaller birds mocking it while it tries to rest in the canopies of large trees.

Verreaux's owls hunt by using their acute hearing in conjunction with good night vision, and catch hares, nocturnal rodents and ground dwelling birds.





As is typical of most owls they do not build a nest of their own but rather make use of the workmanship of other birds, for example hammerkops. Birds that adopt this strategy are known as tenant nesters.

Contrary to what one might believe, the ear tufts on the top of the owl's head are not for hearing, but for camouflage. Round, circular objects are very foreign and unnatural looking in the bush, so the tufts give the owl's round head an angular effect to help it blend in with its surroundings.

Friends at Serengeti House

(Photos by Adas Anthony)



Serengeti House had some very welcome visitors join the guests at the swimming pool this May. Elephants are often seen on the plains in front of the outside lounge and pool area of Serengeti House. Even though there is a watering hole in the plains about 50 metres from the house, elephants love clean, murk-free water and this time one troop found it too tempting to resist.



A small breeding herd made their way to the poolside while guests were enjoying the view and fresh air from the deck. The herd then stuck their trunks in the pool and began enjoying the refreshing clean water.

Sightings report



(Photo by Adas Anthony)

Lion:	40
Leopard:	6
Cheetah:	17
Elephant:	15
Buffalo:	Multiple sightings daily

Special Sightings:

A journey of 40 giraffe at Junction New Explore and Fisi Road.

Two honey badgers outside the guides' office.

By Lizzie Hamrick
Singita Grumeti
Serengeti
Tanzania
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