

Singita Grumeti

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

Singita



Wildlife Report

For the month of July, Two Thousand and Fifteen

Temperature & Wind

Average maximum	30.9 °C (87.6 °F)
Average minimum	16.4 °C (61.5 °F)
Average wind speed	6 m/s

Rainfall Recorded

Sasakwa	63 mm
Sabora	09 mm
Faru Faru	15 mm
Samaki	03 mm
Risiriba	45 mm

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise	06:47
Sunset	18:48



Lions: As always we had good daily sightings of lions in July. Prides seen were the usual suspects: Sabora West pride, Ridge pride, and Butamtam pride. The Butamtam pride has extended its territory east to the Grumeti River, downstream of Faru Faru, but we are now left wondering where the Mkuyu pride, whose territory has always been this same area of the Grumeti River, moved to?

Six of the Butamtam sub-adult males are now over two years old. It is only a matter of time that their dominant male father(s) kick them out of the pride...

Leopard: Leopard sightings were steady this month, but the Tulia female and her two adorable cubs were not seen until the very end of the month.

Cheetah: Excellent cheetah sightings this month. The most seen of these spotted cats were a female with two young cubs, a female with two eight-month old cubs, and two adult brothers.

Wild Dogs: After some stellar sightings in June, the wild dogs were nowhere to be found in July. Word has it that they have been spending a lot of time in the Nyasirori area of the National Park, southwest of Sabora Camp.



Elephant: The month of July is the peak of the dry season here at Singita Grumeti reserves and, as expected, elephants could be found daily having a drink at the major water points on the property. The Sasakwa Dam and Grumeti River were the best 'hot' spots.

Migration: A cause for celebration! The migration of thousands of wildebeest arrived and stayed with us the entire month.

For all of June there was no sign of the migration, and it seemed like no one in the

Serengeti knew where exactly the herds were. We were beginning to believe the wildebeest had passed the Singita Grumeti concession completely.



Then, in the first week of July, the guides reported good herds of wildebeest south of the concession in the National Park.



By the 10th of the month, wildebeest were filtering through from the south everywhere: crossing the Grumeti River around Faru Faru in the east, onto the Nyati Plains in the central areas, and onto the Sabora Plains and Nyasirori Areas in the west.



Pretty soon the concession was covered with wildebeest. The gnus spread thick across the Sasakwa Plains as well as to the east and west.

At the end of July they began moving out in large lines, making their way north.

Feast for kings



As per usual the predators of Singita Grumeti benefitted immensely from the presence of the wildebeest. This pride's territory has continued to expand over the years and, in July, pride members began camping out along the Grumeti River, a perfect place to ambush wildebeest descending into the river on a daily basis.

Guide Kim witnessed one of the dominant Butamtam pride males make two wildebeest kills over the span of just a few hours. On another day guides and guests found a Butamtam pride lioness, eight cubs

and the dominant male lounging idly beside the river with FOUR wildebeest kills at their side!

Other Butamtam pride members held the fort at Sasakwa Dam and snatched up quite a few unsuspecting wildebeest, coming for a drink.

Cheetah cub update

The female cheetah and two little cubs that we first spotted in June continued to grace us with their presence in July and seemed to be doing very well.

In this gorgeous portrait you can see the characteristic black 'tear marks' that cheetahs have. Also the small streamlined head and big nasal cavities to improve oxygen intake when in full sprint, and to assist their breathing when they are suffocating captured prey.

Their mother is keeping them well-fed and the trio were seen often with Thomson's gazelle kills in close proximity.



Great white pelican



We don't usually have pelicans at Singita Grumeti, so Ryan and I were delighted to find two great white pelicans (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) perching on a dead dog tree (a tree that has no bark!), along the Robana River.



The pelicans looked beautiful in the early evening sun and, after a little more research, I figured out the reason for their beauty.

While looking at the photo taken by Ryan and reading about them in the bird book, it became immediately obvious that these pelicans had their breeding plumage. The pink-tinged underparts, bare pink-orange face and bill, crest on the back of the head, and the red "nail" at the tip of the bill all indicate a breeding adult great white pelican. Non-breeders don't have the pink undertones and the face and bill are yellow.

Great white pelicans are one of two pelican species in sub-Saharan Africa, the other one being the pink-backed pelican (*Pelecanus rufescens*) and have a very wide distribution across the continent.

By Lizzie Hamrick
All photos by Ryan Schmitt
Singita Grumeti
Serengeti
Tanzania
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