

Tour Report

Botswana – Okavango Delta Photo Safari

2 - 13 July 2022

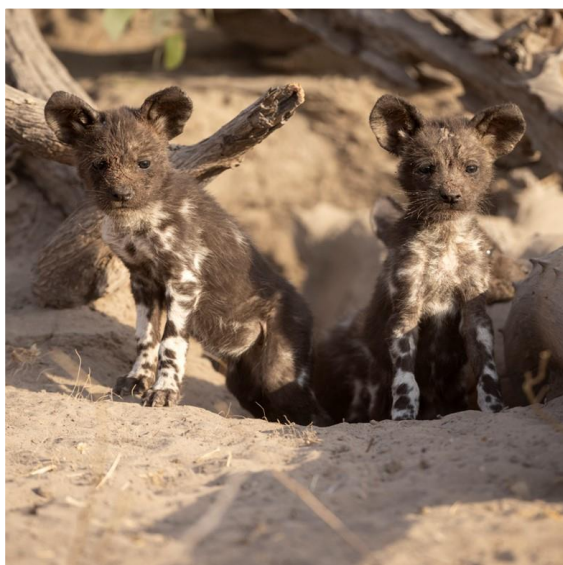
Elephant



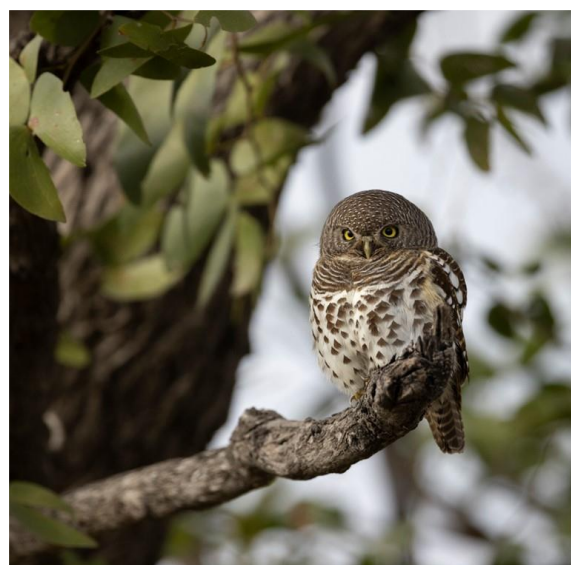
Lion cub



Wild dog pups



Barred owl



Compiled by Emma Healey
Images by Emma Healey & Neil Aldridge

Exploring these infamous areas of Botswana with only some canvas between you and the big cats, hippos and other wildlife that calls the area home is an incredible experience and privilege. Cool mornings and evenings, but lovely and warm during the day, it's a fantastic time to visit this area. Lions were the big stars of this trip, with numerous sightings in lovely light. Other highlights were seven-week-old wild dogs pups, mating leopards and birds galore.

Day 1: Saturday 2 July 2022

Some of us met at check-in and we caught up with the rest of the group at the departure gate.

Day 2: Sunday 3 July 2022

On arrival in Maun, we met up with Neil, who had come out a couple of days early and one of the group members, who had flown in from the US. After finishing off some admin at the airport, we set off for our first camp in Khwai. This involves a drive up the main road north, which passes a number of villages, leaving the tarmac behind at Shorobi and getting our first taste of the dirt roads that we were going to become much more familiar with over the next few days, arriving after a while at 'buffalo gate' where the wildlife sightings begin. We had two large bull elephants at the side of the road acting as our welcoming committee, but unfortunately, they weren't willing models. While TJ and his vehicle were looking for a bird in a tree, they spotted a young lesser spotted genet curled up in some low branches waiting for its mother to return with some food. This was our first really good photo opportunity as the red leaves set it in a lovely foreground and background. As we drove up the main road, there were a number of sightings including a lion mother and her four cubs (around 5-6 months old). The light started to go as we were driving up the main road, so we started spotlighting along the side of the road and spotted a genet in the scrub. As we entered the eastern area of the park heading towards our camp, the wildlife sightings became more frequent, including our first views of spring hares, which then ducked into their burrows and a wild cat hunting for rodents in the ground. Being observed by a white-faced owl, we entered our camp and were able to stretch our legs and were introduced to our home for the next three nights by the campfire, then we all eagerly ate dinner and went to bed, ready for the early start.



Day 3: Monday 4 July 2022

We left the camp for the first time today with the sky glowing a stunning warm red colour. As we drove, the birds came to life and started to stretch their wings. We had our first view in the pre-sunlight of a herd of zebra so we waited with them for the sun to come up over the savannah. Casting a lovely warm red light across the bush and tall grasses, we got some lovely shots of the zebra, and a lilac-breasted roller and practised some backlighting with the dagga seed pods. Continuing our drive, we moved towards the southern ground hornbills that we could hear calling. Some were positioned in a tree, and some were on the ground foraging for breakfast. From here, we drove to the river, past a herd of impala, and spent some time with the jacanas fishing in the shallows of the river. We talked about the behaviour of the jacanas and noted the fact that the female leaves the male with the chick, so we saw some swapping of responsibilities. While at the edge of the river, we also spotted a large number of water birds, such as a large egret, blacksmith lapwings, lesser striped swallows and pied kingfishers hovering and fishing.



What a way to start! Driving further on the sandy roads, there was a constant sound of red-billed spur-fowl and we came across a family of two adults and two young juveniles walking towards us on the road. The sun was starting to get quite warm and heat haze was taking over and starting to affect the photography, so we went back to camp for some time to relax and recharge (ourselves and our batteries). The wildlife watching doesn't stop when at camp, however, during this time we were visited by various different types of hornbill and green wood hoopoes.

As we left for our afternoon drive, we drove east to explore the other side of the park. We came upon some hippos enjoying the cool waters of a lagoon, yawning and basking, being overlooked by a preening African fish eagle. One of the big draws for photography is the gorgeous little bee-eater. When you find them, they tend to stay in the same area for some time as they hunt, so it's a great subject to spend time with. We sat for a while, watching them flit around and got some lovely



images of them. We then moved onwards, with a quick stop for a beautiful pearl spotted owl, who

paused briefly on a branch near the road, showing its front and back, including the eye-shaped markings on its back to confuse predators.

We stopped at a group of giraffes, lit by the waning afternoon sun. We pulled up next to a small, perfectly still lagoon to watch the most beautiful sunset. It was a fantastic place for everyone to enjoy taking some reflection images in the water and watching the sandgrouse, ducks and storks flying over to roost with a sundowner in hand.

On the way home the spotlight came out and we started the night drive, as the nocturnal species start to get up and look for food as the sun sets. We were really pleased when we spotted a serval walking along the road - we waited for the second vehicle to join and then followed it along the road as it hunted for a few minutes. It was really unconcerned about us watching so we stayed with it as it caught a rodent and then continued hunting so we left her to it.

As we were getting ready to head over from the campfire for some dinner, there was a call from the tree in the centre of camp and there, staring at everyone who came to look at it, was a scops owl. It sat there for some time, allowing everyone to see it and those who wanted to get some images of it.

In Khwai we are able to go out on a night drive after dark, so the offer was given and everyone was keen to head out and see what we could find. We set off after dinner with spotlights from both vehicles searching the bushes. The wildlife after dark is more skittish but if you can spot it, it feels like a real treat. We had a large variety of wildlife - big and small! There were a number of spring hares hopping around in the scrub, in and out of their burrows. Unfortunately never close enough for a good photo but great fun to watch. The big highlight of the night was the six wildcats spotted throughout the drive - six! Some were quite shy, but others did just sit and pose for us. Night drive photography is always a challenge - a lot of it is about seeing the wildlife - but most people were able to get a good shot of the cats. On our drive, we also spotted kudu, hyena and a large Verreaux's eagle owl, in the tree right next to camp. Everyone went to bed very happy after a great day of sightings and photography.



Day 4: Tuesday 5 July 2022

We left the camp early again this morning with the warm red glow of the morning sun coming through the thin cloud layer. During the night most of us had been made aware of some lions nearby, hearing their calls as well as hyenas, so it was likely they had made a kill nearby. We drove off in the direction of the calls and found the hyenas fairly quickly, so we followed them through the bush in case they were leading us to the lions. After a while, we changed course, heading back to where the impalas had been looking. Seeing another hyena crossing the plains, we looked and saw a black-backed jackal running and alert. Panning round the dead trees with the binoculars, we spotted a lioness standing out in the warm light. We drove towards here and discovered nine lions, three young males and six females, lying with huge bellies after a big meal of a young giraffe. Sadly the giraffe's mother returned twice to look for her foal, but in the end, gave up. There were around ten hyenas trying their luck to get a piece of the action, but the lions were doing a very good job of protecting their breakfast.



One group had great sightings of ground hornbill, wildebeest and impala, making the most of the sunrise with some backlit images. We all met at the lions and observed them for a while.

Having more time in camp over the lunch break we decided to run a couple of workshops. Emma talked about getting off auto and how to use manual settings to have more control over images and to be able to be more creative. Neil then talked through some more creative ideas, including panning, black and whites and other such techniques. In addition to this time in small groups, the camp had a plethora of wildlife that visited, including hornbills and green wood hoopoes, which enabled everyone to have the opportunity to walk around and try and photograph them and practice some birds in flight.

On the afternoon drive, we saw some dwarf mongoose coming out of a tree trunk close to camp, Bennett's woodpecker and some hornbills as well as some of the usual birds of prey flying overhead. As the sun began to set, the light became beautifully warm and we were looking for something to photograph before it disappeared. We drove through a narrow clearing and came across a large bull elephant, which was showing some defensive behaviour so we switched off the engine and waited for it to clear the road. It spent quite a while enjoying the trees and saplings in the clearing before it went into the bushes. While we were there, another vehicle passes and kicked up some dust, so we were able to talk through some techniques for using dust in situations like this to make some creative images. Unfortunately for us, the elephant didn't oblige by getting into the desired position, but it was a beautiful moment to watch. As the sun was setting, we came across a small herd of kudu, some of which were happy to pose before heading off into the trees. The light was fading by this point, but a green wood hoopoe and a hornbill posed on some nearby dead trees enabling us to take some silhouettes before returning to camp.

Day 5: Wednesday 6 July 2022

It's moving day! It was already time to leave our first camp and it was an early start as we were up and out of the tents by 06:00 so that they could be dismantled, relocated and put up again in time for our arrival this evening. It's a big undertaking and as soon as we're out of the tents, the team are in there working hard.

We had a quick breakfast and left the camp to give them space and headed off to see what we could find along our journey westwards. The first thing we came across was a huge herd of elephants grazing on the mopani trees. It's incredible how well hidden they are as you can get quite close without seeing them and suddenly as you notice one, you start to see more and more around the area. We got a call from the other vehicle to say they'd located the lions close to the river so we drove quickly towards the area. There were already a few vehicles there as it turns out the lions had come through a mobile camp and stolen an electricity cable. They were obviously well fed and rested as they were enjoying playing and chasing each other around. After some time playing, they decided it was time to cross the river into Moremi Game Reserve. One vehicle got a lovely view of the crossing, while the other stayed a little longer with the young female playing with the wire. After a while he realised he'd been left alone so he called the rest of the pride and then crossed the river after them, giving himself a shock with a leaf in the water thinking it was a crocodile, which was really funny to watch.



We drove further along the river, passing some pied kingfishers fishing and our first malachite kingfisher sitting on the reeds. In one of the trees we passed on the river, a barred owlet was keeping watch so both vehicles stopped for a while to get some lovely shots of it sitting there posing nicely. Further along the river, TJ spotted a giant kingfisher sitting behind some branches of a dead tree so we tried to get closer. Unfortunately, it managed to keep itself fairly hidden, even when it flew to another tree, but it was a lovely sighting for both vehicles. As we continued a little further, in the tall grasses there was a saddled billed stork digging for food in the marsh. It was many people's first sighting of one of these beautiful birds so we stayed and watched for a while. The two vehicles regrouped for a morning coffee close to a waterhole that was being enjoyed by a large bull elephant making the most of the cooling water on a warm morning as well as a family of warthogs.

After the coffee stop, it was time to leave Khwai and head towards our next base - Moremi. We went further into the bush, spotting a couple of very well camouflaged steenbok and a couple of kori bustards walking through the savannah. We then met the main road through the centre of Moremi, flanked on either side by small mopani bushes. We continued along this straight road for some time, occasionally stopping for elephant or a steenbok in the bushes. On the road, heading to the gate to Moremi, we came across a large herd of elephants with a number of young ones as well as some older, more protective ones. We turned off the engine and watched them for some time, feeding on the bushes and play fighting with each other. After a while here, it was time to cross the wooden bridge and enter the park. We headed for our new camp, being welcomed on the way by a scrub hare unusually visible during daylight hours.



The new camp was situated on an island next to a beautiful lagoon, which attracted a number of waders and grazing herbivores, keeping the resident hippos company. The camp itself was nestled inside the trees and we all unloaded from the vehicles, glad to have arrived and settled into our tents before dinner. It's not possible to do night drives in Moremi so after the long journey, we all took the opportunity of some drinks by the campfire, dinner and an early night.

Day 6: Thursday 7 July 2022

This morning we left early as usual to explore our new surroundings. The camp was located on an island by the flood waters of the Delta, and we came across some zebra heading to a waterhole. A bachelor herd of giraffe were making the most of the lush green leaves and we spent some time watching them and discussing how to tell their age and who might be the dominant male. It all comes down to size and colour and the oldest male was definitely darker, with more battle scars.

The usual suspects made an appearance on the morning drive, including kudu, zebra, warthog, lilac-breasted rollers and another couple of kori bustards. There was also a fairly regular flow of bateleur eagles flying overhead. As we drove towards a large waterhole, we spotted a large troop of Chacma baboons, the first we'd seen on the trip. One was keeping watch on a termite mound, while the others made a beeline for the water. They passed by two female ostriches who were enjoying some grass and watching the troop pass. It was a hot day and as well as the baboons, a small herd of zebra and a lone wildebeest made their way to drink as well. We took the opportunity to stop for some coffee, once the baboons had dispersed and then continued with our drive. We drove off the road towards the water again and took the opportunity to try some contrast black and white images of the herd of zebra as the sun was so strong at that point.



On our way back to camp, we came across a small group of tsessebe, which let us get closer than the ones we'd seen so far, so we managed to grab some shots of them. We also passed a small group of common reedbuck, that ran into the reeds, as we watched two fish eagles with a juvenile flying overhead looking for prey.

After lunch and a rest in camp, it was time to head out for our afternoon drive. We came across a hippo wallowing in a shallow river with its head up. The group was really keen to get a shot of a hippo yawning so we sat for a while and were finally rewarded with a huge yawn so everyone was happy. As the sun was starting to lower and the warm light was beginning to penetrate the low trees, we came across a large herd of buffalo. We were able to get quite close to them and capture some lovely images of the herd as they made their way slowly towards the edge of the clearing. A group of cattle egrets flew off into the trees to roost and the buffalos moved through the trees.

As the light began to fade, Katembo spotted some wild dog tracks on the road so we drove along and tried to find them, but unfortunately couldn't see where they had gone when they went into the bush. We drove past a beautiful baobab that gave us some lovely reflections as the sun set and then were treated to a large bull elephant crossing through the tall grasses in beautiful red post-sunset light.



When we returned to camp after dark and sat around the campfire before dinner, Neil treated the group to some information about sausage trees as there was one in camp. There was a large sausage fruit that was passed around to show its weight and density, and Neil spoke about how there is concern about the lack of younger sausage trees, the main reason being that rhinos are the main distributor and as their population decreases, the spread of the sausage fruit seeds, unfortunately, declines as well.

Day 7: Friday 8 July 2022

This morning many of us were woken up early to the sound of lions calling not too far from camp, so we started out east to see if we could find them. After only around ten minutes, we spotted the head of a lioness among the long grasses. Gradually she stood up and walked to the left, closely followed by two other females. She walked along the flood plain calling and was met by four older cubs and we were able to watch them greeting each other fondly. Some of the group headed off towards the waterhole near the baobab tree to check on the wild dog tracks from yesterday. After some time driving around and no luck, we returned to the savannah where the lions were now sitting on a mound, considering their breakfast options as there was a good mix of zebra and impala. However, there were also three ostriches close to the waterhole, so the lions had to keep their heads down to avoid being seen. We were able to position ourselves close to the mound they were lying on to enable us to get some portrait shots in the grass. Having waited for quite some time anticipating a hunt, the lions seemed to be too relaxed to move in the near future, so we decided to move on. Driving past the diminished water in the water hole, we noticed two jackals - one sunning itself on the mud and the other shading itself in a small bush.

A pair of African fish eagles were standing guard over the water hole, which despite being very low, was still fairly full of fish. One flew from the water back to the tree and they swapped. We attempted to follow the wild dog tracks from the evening before, but unfortunately, we hit a point in the road where the floodwater was too deep, so we had to abandon our search. Instead, Neil treated us all to a talk about the floodwaters and how they spread through the Delta from the Angolan mountains.

During the lunch break, Emma found a mantis in the bush and showed it to those in the group who wanted to grab some quick macro images of it. Katembo went through the bird list with the group, ensuring everyone was up to date with what we'd seen so far.



We then drove out into the park where we were greeted by large herds of lechwe and continued to a beautiful lagoon where hippos were enjoying the cool water and spoonbills were sifting the shallow waters for food in the last light of the day. As we drove along the road, we noticed the vehicle in front had spotted something, so we sped towards them to see two honey badgers running through the grass. They were so speedy so we tried to grab some images in the fading light, but they passed us and ran off down the road into the tall grass. We turned the corner and were greeted by a couple of members of the team who had set up some sundowners for our last night with them, next to a waterhole. With hippos and crocodiles in and around the water, we had plenty to keep us busy. As the sun set, the nightjars began to fly around in their droves, picking off the insects on the water, accompanied by the incredible sounds of frogs in the water chirping.



Day 8: Saturday 9 July 2022

Our time mobile camping was coming to an end. This morning we packed our bags again and left our beautiful lagoon camp before sunrise on a game drive, heading in the direction of the lions we'd heard calling during the night. We had started to hear their calls during dinner, fairly close to camp, so we had kept an ear on where the calls were coming from and during the night they moved across to the west of camp, where they had crossed over a couple of the channels. We drove in the direction of the last calls and were looking for two of the larger males in the area. Just as the sun was rising, we spotted a female lion walking alongside a water hole towards the tall grasses. We drove around to the other side of the grass and she was clearly following a route through to lead her to the channel, which she would then have to cross. Both vehicles moved to the channel and waited in the hope that the lioness would jump. Unfortunately, when she did we were in the wrong spot, which led to some disappointment. But ... as we rounded the bend in the direction we'd seen the first lioness, a second was walking across the savannah and it was perfectly timed with the rising sun shedding some warm red light onto the grass. She followed the same route as the previous female and we were able to position ourselves well, giving her enough space to cross and for everyone to get an opportunity to capture it. A special way to start the day.



From the lionesses, we carried on driving towards the main road back to the 'highway' and the South Gate. We drove past a number of elephant, steenbok and a number of birds along the way. The first vehicle was stopped by the side of the road, so we stopped behind them, and they had seen a leopard through the bush at a waterhole but unfortunately for us, it had been spooked by our arrival and disappeared. As we continued to drive down the road, we saw that the leopard's prints had started much further down the road so it had travelled a long distance. We continued our drive and arrived at the South Gate in time for a quick coffee and a visit from a yellow mongoose, who crossed the road in front of us as we had a break.

We reached the Buffalo Gate and it was time to say farewell to TJ and Katembo and swap to our new guides/drivers from Mma Dinare - Chris, Alco and Grass. Mma Dinare translates as mother buffalo, and this was to be our lodge accommodation for the next few nights. The drive to camp was quite a long one, along the fence for some time on sandy roads, and then heading off into the new landscapes of the Delta. As we approached the lodge, there were some giraffes drinking near the road, creating some lovely reflections in the still water. We arrived at the lodge to a lovely greeting from Onks, Retta and the team and went straight in for a welcome drink and some lunch. Looking out from the balcony at the lounge, we saw a Goliath heron, storks and some African darters enjoying the waters. A giraffe with one horn was eating the leaves from the trees near camp and a hornbill and crested barbet made themselves known along with the resident tree squirrels, trying to get some of the leftovers from lunch, as well as a variety of lovely birds, including emerald-spotted wood dove, green wood hoopoes and more. A wildlife lover's paradise.



We were able to have a short break after lunch before going out for an afternoon drive. After a few attempts at getting some images of crimson-breasted shrikes, we found two more accommodating models who paused just long enough for the group to get some images of them. After driving around for some time, a call came on the radio that a pride of lions had been spotted close to the river. Our drivers made a beeline from the sighting, driving straight through the river, which was a bit of a shock to all on board! The way they were able to negotiate the rivers and roads as one was amazing. We found the lions and positioned ourselves in a few different places to get some different views of the resting cats. As the sun began to set, the lions started to stretch and move on. We repositioned ourselves to the other side of the river as the water was so still, that if they went the way we hoped they would, then we'd get some lovely reflections. Thankfully we did

exactly that and we were able to get a lovely range of shots of the pride walking along the riverbank and resting before going hunting.



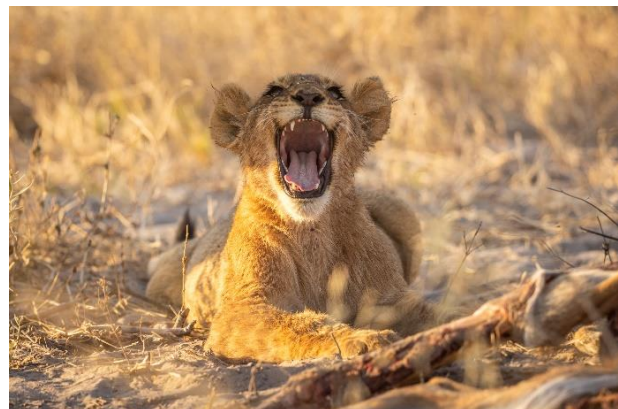
One male was obviously injured, and the pride walked slowly, waiting for him, but he managed to follow on a little more slowly. Happy that we'd made the most of the evening light with these gorgeous cats, we stopped for some sundowners by the river before heading back to the camp for dinner.

Day 9: Sunday 10 July 2022

We went out this morning to explore our new area at sunrise. Slightly different to Moremi with more grassland and wetter patches, our vehicles were able to take on submarine status and travel through the channels with ease, opening up the possibilities for positioning the vehicle at sightings. The group split this morning - with two groups stopping en route for a leisurely mokoro ride to enjoy the peace and quiet on the water and see some painted reed frogs up close.

Alco got the call that another vehicle had come across two young male lions, who have been pushed out of the main pride and were now on their own. We drove around the savannah to the edge of a river, passing a number of egrets, herons and plovers and found the lions snoozing in the early morning sunshine. We waited a few minutes with them but it was clear that they wanted to sleep, so we left them to it and drove on. We returned to camp, passing some banded mongooses crossing the road into the undergrowth.

This afternoon started with a different species of mongoose, a yellow mongoose, keeping watch from its termite mound home. We then heard of a pair of lionesses, who were on a kudu kill, with six young cubs. We sped over and all three vehicles spent a couple of hours enjoying the incredible sighting of the cubs and their mothers. The light was beautiful and enabled us to get some lovely images.



On our return to camp tonight, we were met by John from the Botswana Predator Conservation, who was there to give us a talk on wild dogs, one of their main subjects. Their work began with the focus being wild dogs, but it continues to diversify to include other predators and the important parameters impacting these

species so that they can address the challenges and create a more sustainable future. They have developed a unique data set documenting the life histories and behaviour, not only of the wild dog packs in the study area but also of the lions, leopards, cheetahs and spotted hyenas.

Their website is <https://www.bpctrust.org/> and they are always very happy to receive any donations to help their work. We donate a portion of the profits from this trip to the trust.

Day 10: Monday 11 July 2022

The excitement was palpable this morning as we left camp, with a number of the group never having seen wild dogs and John assuring us that today was the day. The dogs hunt overnight, so we drove slowly towards the known location of a den to see what we could find on the way. One vehicle located the two lionesses and six cubs again, navigating the mopani trees, dried-up waterholes and tall grasses. The cubs were in a playful mood this morning.



Passing by a creche of giraffes of varying ages, we arrived at the dog den at around 07:30 and there was no sign, so we stopped the vehicles and waited. Suddenly after around half an hour, we spotted movement past one of the mopani trees and there was our first sighting of a wild dog. It was the alpha female of the pack and the mum of the pups. She ran towards the den and happy that it was safe to do so, she called the pups out for breakfast. Six tiny faces emerged from the sand, clearly very happy to see mum return. There were eight cubs, but John says they'd lost two in the past week. They were around seven weeks old, so still staying in the den, but starting to prepare to learn to hunt in a couple of weeks. We felt very privileged to spend time with them.



The pups were not out for long, but watching them come out to greet the adults, devour the meat and have a little play was incredible. Two were obviously braver than the others and did come out at one point to suckle but returned fairly quickly to the safety of the den. Then it was time for the adults to relax and enjoy some downtime, obviously always with one eye open to protect the den.

After some opportunities to capture some shots of the adults, including a dusty fight with some lovely light, it was time to head back to the camp. On the way, we had a good view of a Verreaux's eagle owl perched in the high branches of a tree. The morning was not over yet though ... instead of driving back to camp, we come across a beautifully set up table by some water, with our brunch and a bar. What a lovely surprise. Everyone was keen to excitedly chat about the morning over some delicious brunch. Some pied kingfishers were hunting nearby and a couple of Maribou storks flew in to fish in the shallow waters. After everyone has finished, we headed back to camp for a well-earned rest and bid farewell to John.

This afternoon we went out for our final afternoon drive. We spotted some elephants in the trees so sat and watched them for a few minutes and just as we agreed the light wasn't great for photos, someone spotted two honey badgers running behind us! Unfortunately, they'd already passed us and were too quick, but this now brought our tally up to around ten for the trip.

Towards the end of the trip, we encouraged people to start to think about species that they hadn't got an image of, or would like more of. One of these species was kudu and we were lucky to find a small group and capture some lovely images of them. We also spotted a family of waterbuck, which was nice as we hadn't seen many. We stopped briefly for a number of birds, such as lilac-breasted rollers, open-billed storks, coppery-tailed coucal and crimson-breasted shrike. Sundowners this evening were by a small waterhole, near a large sandy area and some young giraffes were play fighting as we watched our final African sunset for this trip.

Day 11: Tuesday 12 July 2022

Our final morning. We offered an optional short morning drive before our flight, which some of the group decide to skip so two vehicles went out in different directions. We left a little earlier and although there were tones of red on the horizon, it was still quite dark so we did some spotlighting – enabling us to see a wildcat and two honey badgers. As the first rays of red sunlight hit the grasses, an excited Alco came over the radio to say that the other vehicle had located a leopard. We left the zebra we were photographing and drove (with Chris channelling Lewis Hamilton!) towards the other vehicle. The way the guides navigate the seemingly endless landscape of sand, grass and mopani trees is incredible and Chris made light work of locating them. We approached slowly where the other vehicle was and got our first glimpse of the leopard walking through the grass. We followed slowly behind him through the mopani bushes, where he met with his mate. They were obviously in their honeymoon period as the other vehicle had been alerted to their presence by the sounds of their mating. We were able to spend around half an hour with them until we reluctantly had to go back to camp. What a way to end the trip!

After a quick breakfast, we pack up our final bits and say goodbye to the wonderful staff at Mma Dinare. On our drive along the sandy roads towards the airport, it felt like most species had come out to see us off. Two lion sightings – a single male and a small pride a bit later on, lechwe, giraffe, elephants, zebra, some ground hornbills, lilac breasted rollers and more of what we'd become accustomed to seeing.

Winding our way through the landscape we hit the buffalo fence and then the main road at Mawana Gate. We turned right and drove back towards Maun, hitting the tarmac road again at Shorobe. Chris and Edwin dropped us off at the airport and we said goodbye to Botswana, and the members of the group staying on, starting the journey home with lots of fabulous memories.



Checklist



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
	MAMMALS	MAMMALIA										
1	Chacma baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>					✓			✓	✓	
2	Southern lesser galago/bushbaby	<i>Galago moholi</i>		✓	✓							
3	Scrub hare	<i>Lepus saxatillis</i>				✓						
4	Smith's tree squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	S. African springhare	<i>Pedetes capensis</i>	✓	✓	✓							
6	Cape porcupine	<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>			✓							
7	Black-backed jackal	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>		✓			✓					
8	African wild dog	<i>Lycaon pictus</i>									✓	
9	Honey badger	<i>Mellivora capensis</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓			
10	Banded mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>		✓						✓		
11	Selous's mongoose	<i>Paracynictis</i>										

12	Slender mongoose	<i>Galerella sanguinea</i>			✓			✓	✓			
13	Yellow mongoose	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>					✓		✓			
14	Dwarf mongoose	<i>Helogale parvula</i>			✓	✓			✓			
15	Suricate	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>										
16	Small-spotted genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>	✓		✓				✓			
17	S.A Large-spotted genet	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	✓		✓							
18	African civet	<i>Civettictis civetta</i>							✓			
19	Spotted hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	✓		✓							
20	African wild cat	<i>Felis silvestris cafra</i>		✓	✓							
21	Serval	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>	✓	✓								
22	Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
23	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>							✓			✓
24	Elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Burchell's zebra	<i>Equus quagga burchellii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
26	Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
27	Common warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

28	Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	African buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30	Greater kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>				✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
31	Red lechwe	<i>Kobus leche</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
32	Water buck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>		✓			✓					
33	Southern reedbuck	<i>Redunca arundinum</i>					✓	✓	✓			
34	Tsessebe	<i>Damaliscus lunatus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
35	Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
36	White-tailed mongoose	<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>		✓					✓			
37	Pygmy mouse	<i>Mus minutoides</i>			✓			✓				
38	Side-striped jackal	<i>Lupulella adusta</i>						✓				
	BIRDS	AVES										
1	Helmeted guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Orange river francolin	<i>Scleroptila gutturalis</i>										
3	Crested francolin	<i>Dendroperdix sephaena</i>		✓		✓	✓					
4	Red-billed spurfowl	<i>Pternistis adspersus</i>	✓									

5	Swainson's spurfowl	<i>Pternistees swainsonii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
6	White-faced whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓		
7	Spur-winged goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓		
8	Knob-billed duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>		✓			✓					
9	Egyptian goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
10	Cape teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>						✓	✓			
11	Red-billed teal	<i>Anas erthorhyncha</i>					✓					
12	Hottentot teal	<i>Anas hottentota</i>					✓					
13	Little grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>					✓					
14	Yellow-billed stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>		✓	✓	✓						
15	Saddle-billed stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegal.</i>						✓	✓		✓	
16	Marabou stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>		✓					✓	✓	✓	
17	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>						✓	✓	✓		
18	African sacred ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>		✓					✓	✓	✓	
19	African spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>						✓	✓	✓		
20	Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓					✓			

21	Goliath heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>							✓	✓		
22	Squacco heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		✓					✓	✓		
23	Rufus-bellied heron	<i>Ardeola rufiventris</i>		✓								
24	Western cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>							✓			
25	Black heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>		✓								
26	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓					✓	✓		
27	Intermediate egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>		✓						✓		
28	Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>							✓	✓		
29	Slaty egret	<i>Egretta vinaceigula</i>								✓		
30	Reed cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>								✓	✓	
31	African darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>		✓				✓		✓		
32	Common ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>						✓				
33	Hooded vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>			✓			✓				
34	White-backed vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>						✓	✓	✓		
35	African fish eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	
36	Tawny eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>		✓					✓	✓		

37	African hawk-eagle	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>				✓						
38	Black-chested snake eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>							✓			
39	Brown snake-eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>		✓						✓		
40	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
41	African marsh harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>		✓				✓				
42	Gabar goshawk	<i>Micronisus tachiro</i>		✓								
43	Black-winged kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>				✓						
44	Dickinson's kestrel	<i>Falco dickinsoni</i>							✓			
45	Kori bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>						✓	✓	✓		
46	Red-crested korhaan	<i>Lophotis ruficrista</i>	✓									
47	Black crane	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>		✓				✓				
48	African crane	<i>Crex egregia</i>							✓			
49	Spotted thick-knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>		✓			✓		✓			
50	Long-toed lapwing	<i>Vanellus crassirostris</i>	✓				✓					
51	Blacksmith lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
52	Crowned lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>		✓				✓		✓		

53	African jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
54	Double-banded sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>		✓				✓	✓			
55	Red-eyed dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
56	Ring-necked dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
57	Laughing dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>						✓				
58	Speckled pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>						✓				
59	Namaqua dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>		✓				✓	✓			
60	Grey-go-away-bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
61	Coppery-tailed coucal	<i>Centropus cupreicaudus</i>		✓					✓			
62	Senegal coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>					✓					
63	African barred owlet	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>						✓				
64	African scops-owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>		✓								
65	Southern white-faced scops owl	<i>Ptilopus granti</i>		✓								
66	Pearl-spotted owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	✓	✓		✓						
67	Verreaux's eagle-owl	<i>Bubo lacyeus</i>		✓		✓						
68	Spotted eagle-owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>		✓								

69	Marsh owl	<i>Asio capensis</i>				✓						
70	Western barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>			✓							
71	Square-tailed nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus fossli</i>					✓		✓			
72	African palm swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	✓				✓					
73	Lilac-breasted roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
74	Pied kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
75	Malachite kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>		✓		✓						
76	Striped kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>				✓			✓			
77	Little bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓		
78	Swallow-tailed bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>					✓	✓			✓	
79	African hoopoe	<i>Upupa africana</i>		✓								
80	Green wood hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓				
81	Southern yellow-billed hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
82	Southern red-billed hornbill	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
84	Bradfield's hornbill	<i>Tockus branfieldi</i>			✓				✓			
84	African grey hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

85	Southern ground hornbill	<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>		✓	✓							
86	Crested barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
87	Bearded woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos namaquus</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓			
88	Meyer's parrot	<i>Poicephalus meyeri</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
89	White-crested helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>	✓									
90	Black-crowned tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>					✓					
91	Swamp boubou	<i>Laniarius bicolor</i>									✓	
92	Crimson-breasted shrike	<i>lanarius atrococcineus</i>					✓	✓	✓			
93	Long-tailed shrike	<i>Corvinelle melanoleuca</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
94	Fork-tailed drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
95	Southern white-crowned Shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitemens</i>							✓	✓	✓	
96	Pied crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	✓									
97	Southern black tit	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>			✓							
98	African Red-eyed bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>	✓					✓		✓		
99	Brown-throated martin	<i>Riparia palydicola</i>						✓				
100	Lesser-striped swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>		✓	✓	✓						

101	Long-billed crombec	<i>Syvieta rufescens</i>				✓	✓					
102	Zitting cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>				✓	✓					
103	Grey-backed camaroptera	<i>Camaropectera bevicaudata</i>				✓						
104	Tawny-flanked prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>				✓	✓					
105	Southern pied babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>					✓					
106	Arrow-marked babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>		✓								
107	Meves's starling	<i>Lamprotornis mevesii</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
108	Burchell's starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
109	Yellow-billed oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
110	Red-billed oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
111	Capped wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>		✓								
112	Arnot's chat	<i>Myrmecocichla arnotti</i>	✓									
113	African stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>						✓				
114	Pale flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pallius</i>						✓				
115	Chat flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis infuscatus</i>						✓				
116	Amethyst sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>			✓							

117	White-browed sparrow-weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
118	Cape sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>		✓								
119	Southern grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>					✓			✓		
120	Village weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>		✓		✓			✓			
121	Red-billed buffalo weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
122	Red-billed quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓					
123	Red-billed firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta sengala</i>				✓						
124	Green-winged pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>					✓					
125	Blue waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓			
126	African pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		
127	African pied wagtail	<i>Montacilla aguimp</i>						✓				
128	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>		✓								
129	White-headed vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>						✓				
130	Mozambique nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus fossii</i>					✓	✓	✓			
131	Water thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>		✓							✓	
132	Greater honeyguide	<i>(Indicator indicator</i>									✓	

133	Open billed stork	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>									✓	
134	Pygmy goose	<i>Nettapus auritus</i>		✓				✓				
	REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS	REPTILIA AND AMPHIBIA										
1	Nile monitor	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>				✓			✓			
2	Nile crocodile	<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>					✓	✓				
3	Painted reed frog	<i>Hyperolius mamoratus</i>								✓		
4	Striped skink	<i>Mabuya striata</i>						✓	✓			
	BUTTERFLIES	RHOPALOCERA										
1	Orange tip	<i>Colotis danae annae</i>			✓			✓				
2	Yellow pansy	<i>Junonia hierta</i>				✓						
3	African monarch	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	INSECTS	INSECTA										
1	Bark antlion	<i>Centroclisis sp</i>				✓						