

## **KRUGER TOUR OCTOBER 2011**

En route. we spent a night in the **Karoo National Park** – where we found this beautiful specimen of Cape Mountain Zebra.

Dark Karoo skies on the way to Golden Gate indicated an approaching storm – exhilarating like nothing else!



In **Fouriesburg**, we saw this classic example of an Eastern Free State sandstone church.



On to the **Golden Gate Highlands National Park** – in the spectacular Maluti Mountains on the border between South Africa and Lesotho.



Spent a day hiking and sightseeing in the park – awesome mountain buttresses, verdant valleys and fresh highland air!



We entered the **Kruger National Park** through the Malelane Gate, and en route to **Pretoriuskop Camp** encountered a family of White Rhino wallowing – as well as a very busy Dung Beetle!



En route to Satara the next day, both big and small game were on the road – including this Elephant and Leopard Tortoise!



A pair of Cheetah were on a morning hunt – and this little Agama popped out at the **Tshokwane** picnic site.





We came upon a very irritated Buffalo bull cooling off – and, incredibly excitingly, a family of Ground Hornbills, with this shaggy youngster!



A tree-full of Vultures near **Satara** – and a close-up of a particularly grumpy African White-backed Vulture!





Birds were as much a part of our quest as were animals – so a page of them! A regal Martial Eagle; hungry Green Pigeon; intently-concentrating Woodland Kingfisher; and curious Pirit Batis – all in the surrounds of Satara.



En route to **Balule Camp**, our way was blocked for at least an hour by a huge herd of Ellies raiding Marula trees! This mom and babe were part of the group.

Balule is one of our two new Kruger “finds” – a tiny camp without electricity on the banks of the Olifants River – the way Kruger must have been 50 years ago!



The terrain around Balule is lushly spectacular – in summer anyway. The Olifants forms a very dramatic gorge just beyond the camp – and massive *Euphorbias* line the craggy cliff-edges.





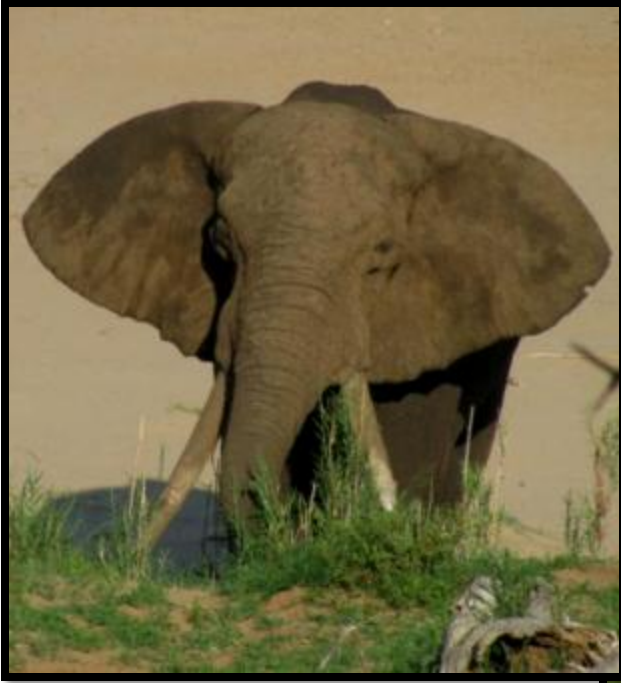
Birds abounded in the Olifants - from Yellow-billed Storks to a Goliath Heron posing among a Hippo pod!; and one of the Balule Leopards gave us our best game-sighting of the trip!





At **Letaba Camp**, temperatures soared to 40 degrees C-plus – and the shade of the camp lured some of the “smaller” game – like the Rock Monitor and female Bushbuck who took shelter near our tents. Hippo and Waterbuck abounded in the Letaba River floodplain.





Elephant in the north of Kruger are legendary – this massive old bull gave us a short fright: and a huge breeding herd sped across the floodplain en route somewhere important!



On the way to Tamboti, this Chacma Baboon mother and babe presented themselves; and we witnessed a baby Blue Wildebeest taking his first steps!



Saw this sleepy Lioness near the **Timbavati** picnic site en route to our second major new Kruger find – **Tamboti Tented Camp**, set in lush riverine forest on the banks of the Timbavati River.



We came across this baby Black-backed Jackal just outside camp – and only met his mom the next day!





Then – sadly – it was back to the 21<sup>st</sup> century world – the N1 back to Cape Town, trucks, road-works et al – ah well!

A night in the town of **Colesburg** – with its magnificent Dutch Reformed Church and Victorian cottage-lined streets – was the final stop on the way back to Cape Town.

