



## Governors Guide to August in Masai Mara

In August we experience cool mornings around 14 degrees Celsius and warm days averaging around 28 degrees. August days begin with gorgeous sunrises. With the migration passing through the grasslands become short and dry.

There are often large river crossings around midday with lots of crocodiles taking **wildebeest**. On occasion we have had herds of wildebeest crossing the Mara River right in front of the bar at Governors Camp. **Wildebeest** and **zebra** cover the plains, moving around following the pasture and the rain often covering the plains from Governors Camp as far as the eye can see.



**Elephant** move about and there are young calves in these family herds. We have wonderful sightings of elephant crossing the Mara River and they are also frequent visitors to camp feeding on and knocking over the *Teclea Nobilis* trees. Elephant feel pressure from the massive wildebeest herds and tend to retreat into the woodlands when the wildebeest are around.

The big herd of 500 **buffalo** moves back into the Marsh where there is plenty of fresh water and coarse grasses to feed on. With lots of young calves in the herd the Males stay with them protecting the young from predators often chasing lion up trees when they get too close. Large herds of **giraffe** move from one feeding ground to another. **Topi** are well spread out across the plains and are heavily pregnant as are **Cokes hartebeest**, which are well spread out on the short grass plains. Herds of **eland** also occupy these plains browsing on the fruit of the croton bushes. In the woodland verges **impala** with new fawns gather. There are **Olive baboons** here in big numbers with infants also born recently. **Grants** and **Thomson Gazelles** are on the short grass plains where they give birth to their



young. **Warthogs** also have piglets in August, the sows leaving their families to farrow in a separate hole; here she will stay with her young nursing for several weeks. Warthogs are known to foster young.

**Spotted Hyena** are seen everywhere and as the grass is grazed down so sightings of **Serval Cat** increase. As Mara River levels recede so **hippos** are forced to move closer increasing the stress levels and causing males to become more aggressive towards one another. We also frequently see hippos out grazing in the daytime.

With food a plenty the **Marsh Pride of lions** remain at the heart of their territory near to Governors Camp hunting wildebeest every day. **Leopard** are seen in the woodlands between the Governors family of camps. **Cheetah** spend time on the short grass plains hunting Thomson Gazelles.



## **Birds**

In the forests the **Quinine trees** lose their leaves, quickly replaced by fruit and flowers, this draws in plenty of birds including **Black and White hornbills**, **Turacos**, **Double Toothed Barbets** and **Olive Pigeons** to feed. With the elephants feeding on the sedge grasses of the Marsh we get lovely sightings of water birds; **Saddle-Billed Storks**, **Yellow-Billed Storks**, **Plovers** and **Lapwings**, **Sacred Ibis** and the first of the **Spoon-billed Storks**. Out on the plains the **ostriches** have eggs in their nests.