

Governors Guide to November in the Masai Mara

Green season in the Mara, the month normally begins hot and dry and ends with the arrival of the rains, hot dry days with thunderstorms in the late afternoon and evening. The rain fills up the Marsh, the savannah grass begins to grow and wild flowers like fireball lilies and flame lilies bloom.

With the grasses grazed down the great herds of the **wildebeest migration** congregate and prepare for their long trek down south. Large River crossings begin ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand as the waiting herds begin to leave.

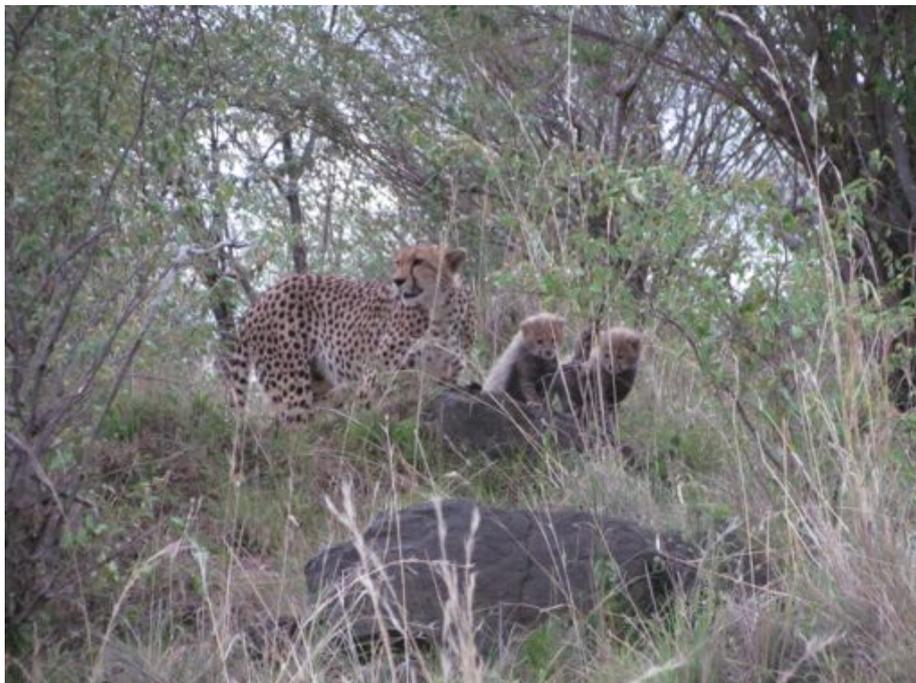
With not much grass around the **elephants** switch their diet to leaves and bark getting most of their nutrition from the trees. Just in time the Warburgia trees in the forests begin to fruit drawing the elephant back in and they spend much time in and around the Governors family of camps.



There are newborns everywhere as **Topi** calve, closely followed by **Impala** and **Giraffe**. **Warthogs** are seen all across the plains. **Bat Eared Foxes** have young in their dens as do **Black Backed jackals** both of whom are seen out and about on the plains. **Defassa Waterbuck** are in breeding herds with 3-6 month old calves in the woodlands around the Marsh and **Bushbuck** are seen at dusk. The Diospyros Tree fruits drawing **baboons** and **blue monkeys** into the woodlands to feed. **Giraffes** are seen moving together in fairly large herds, younger males sparring by necking for mating rights. The breeding herd of **Cape Buffalo** has many young calves and spends much time in the Bila Shaka riverbed where the red oat grass grows. Up on the plains there are **spotted hyena** some with very young cubs in their dens.



The Marsh Pride of **lions** still find plenty of food with the migration still around and the Paradise Pride spend their days close to the river crossing sites, taking advantage of the late traffic of wildebeest and zebra in the area. With the arrival of the rains so the resident male lions begin to travel again patrolling the borders of their rangelands and scent marking to make sure everyone knows this is their turf. **Cheetah** are seen on the short grass plains, as the wildebeest disappear they work hard to keep their meals away from prowling hyena. Some cheetah mothers have tiny cubs hidden in the croton thickets.



Birds

In the Riverine forests the Teclea Nobilis Tree begins to fruit attracting many birds such as the **Double Toothed Barbets** to feed. Small groups of **white storks** pass through, **Montagu's** and **Marsh Harriers** are joined mid month by **Pallid Harriers** and by the end of the month many more "**Ring-tailed Harries**" (immature Montagu's and Pallid Harries) are present. Small groups of **Common Kestrels** start passing through the area mid month. **Common, Green Sandpipers** are usually found along the Mara River while in the Musiara swamp **Wood Sandpiper, Common Snipe** and the odd **Greenshank** are present. The passage of **Eurasian Bee-Eaters** slows and a few **Eurasian Rollers** are seen. **Yellow Wagtails** were very common and by the middle of the month they were joined by **Red-Throated Pipits**. Out on the Mara plains **Northern** (Common) and **Isabelline Wheatears** are quite common and they are joined by a few **Pied Wheatears** later in the month. Other migrants recorded are, **Spotted Flycatcher, Willow Warbler, Blackcap** and **Red-backed Shrike**.