



Lion Tails

Updates by the **Mara Lion Project** on lions in **Mara North Conservancy**

July 2017 – September 2017

New Cheli
pride males?



The two Marsh pride males, Rafiki & Karibu, started to intrude into MNC in May/June this year, and have pretty much stayed around since. They have killed some cubs while oddly enough letting other cubs be. The core Marsh pride is spending more and more time in the Leopard Gorge area and so this could explain why Karibu and Rafiki are wanting to expand their domain. Time will tell if they will settle permanently with the different Cheli pride sub-groups.

Dere & Barrikoi, the two males who used to be in control of the Cheli pride, left MNC seemingly by their own will. There were no known interactions between these two and Rafiki & Karibu. Dere & Barrikoi went into Lemek Conservancy, where the three males, Red, Tatu & Topknot, born into the Marsh pride, were ruling the Lemek pride. The current status is that Red, Tatu & Topknot are with three Lemek females and their cubs in Ol Chorro Conservancy, while Dere & Barrikoi have settled in Lemek Conservancy with five Lemek females, where they have killed the cubs and started to sire their own.



Ex-Cheli
pride males



New dispersing
Cheli male subs



In November and December 2015, Amber and Scarlet had five cubs together, where three males survived. A year later, Amber left the group to give birth to two cubs. When these cubs were 3-4 months old, Amber gave the cubs to Numba and her companion, for them to adopt, which is quite unusual behavior. Amber then went back to Scarlet and the three young males to help raise them. This group of five was last seen together in May inside Lemek Conservancy, and in June, Amber was back in MNC with Scarlet and Amber gave birth to three new cubs. The three males apparently dispersed and we quite recently sighted them southwest of Ol Chorro Conservancy, close to the birder Lemek Conservancy.

Cheli pride groups



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The Cheli pride adult females are split into three, sometimes four, different groups. One group consists of Amber, her three cubs (3-4 months old), (very top) and an unnamed younger female and her two male cubs, just over a year old. They are sometimes accompanied by another group of two females, Scarlet (top right) & Saba (top left). These lions are most of the time seen south of Elephant Pepper Camp. A separate group is hanging around in the area between Serian Camp and Neptune Camp and consists of Nairosi (middle left), who lost her cubs to the Marsh males, and four of the five 2nd generation female cohort (middle right). This group is frequently visited by the female Kali (bottom left) and her two, one-year old male cubs. The last group is made up of Numba (bottom middle) and a yet to be named lioness (bottom right) and their cubs (two of the cubs were given to them by Amber). There used to be nine but now they are down to six cubs, 9-11 months of age. They fled into the southern part of Lemek Conservancy when the two Marsh males came into MNC. This group of eight lions sometimes goes back into MNC in the area North-East of Kicheche Camp.

You may recall from our last edition of Lion Tails that, the Mara Lion Project put a GPS collar on Serian, one of the three dispersing sub-adult Cheli pride males. After only a few months of wearing the collar, Serian was badly beaten up by an unidentified older male, sustaining serious injuries (top). The KWS vet unit treated him twice and after the second treatment we decided to remove the collar, deeming his recovery chances low. For the next couple of weeks, Serian was seen alive and well but then he vanished and there is a very high chance that he did not pull through. A few weeks later, we collared one (bottom left) of his two brothers who both dispersed to the Mara Triangle, and are seen moving between the MMNR and the former, doing well.



Nic Elliot | Mara Lion Project

Serian and his brothers



Nic Elliot | Mara Lion Project

Offbeat pride new males?



Keiwua | Mara Lion P



Keiwua | Mara Lion Project

The handsome brothers Jesse & Frank took over the Offbeat pride in April 2015. Earlier this year, Frank disappeared and a few months later, Jesse left. Jesse was later on found alone in Olare-Motorogi Conservancy (OMC). In August, four youngsters (3 pictured) showed up in the Offbeat area and we were able to ID them as dispersing males from the Iseketa pride in OMC. They are now 26 months old. These boys left their natal pride area in October 2016, disappearing for spell, and now they might end up settling with the Offbeat pride despite their young age and inexperience. It will be interesting to see if the Iseketa boys will sire any cubs successfully.

Offbeat youngsters

After the influx of the Iseketa sub males into the Offbeat area, one of the pride females has taken seven (who used to be eight) cubs a bit away from the core pride area, out of harms way. They are often found by the Enchorro Naibor area and the adult female who is with them seems to be taking good care of them.



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R.I.P. Lilly



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The last remaining old adult Cheli female Lilly, has died at an age of 14 years. She was found dead by conservancy management on June 5th. We are not sure what caused her death but it could be due to fighting with other lions. This means that the Cheli pride now has nine adult females that are seen, split into various groups in MNC.



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