

PREDATOR POST

LION TAILS

MARCH 2025



Updates by the Mara Predator Conservation Programme on lions in the Greater Mara



ORKURET AND SANKAI MALES

Collars for Conservation is a key objective of the programme. Orkuret, a male lion born in Oldikdik Pride, is one of the nine collared lions currently being monitored. Recent tracking data has shown interesting movement patterns, showing him frequently moving between the National Reserve, Mara Triangle and Olare Motorogi Conservancy.

Orkuret has formed a coalition with a male from the Sankai pride. Together, they are currently a nomadic pair, as they have not yet established control over a specific pride and have strategically avoided areas dominated

by established males like the Topi Prides territory, due to the presence of the three dominant Salas males.

In addition to their territorial explorations, Orkuret has been seen courting several females: Samara, a Figtree female; Napono, from the Enkuyanai pride in Olare Motorogi Conservancy; and Kito, from the Marsh pride in the National Reserve.

MALES COALITIONS SOUTHEAST OF THE NATIONAL RESERVE

Towards the end of last year, we observed interesting interactions among male lions in the southwestern part of the National Reserve, particularly in the Salas area. This region has long been home to the Salas main pride, the Salas breakaway pride, and the Oloolamutia breakaway (also known as the Survey pride), whose range extends up to Survey Hill.

For a while, two dominant males, Oloibor and Manywele, controlled this territory. However, they eventually moved on and now control the Black Rock pride in the southern part of the Reserve. What made this area interesting this year is the presence of three male coalitions and a lone male, all within the Salas area. Upon identification, we found that one coalition consisted of four males born in 2020 to the Oloolamutia (Sopa) Pride. The second coalition comprised three sub-adult males born in June 2020 to the Paradise (Serena North) pride, although one of them recently disappeared. The third coalition included three Kaskas males from the Serengeti, who have already sired three cubs with the Salas pride. Additionally, a lone male, known as Orkirikoi (also referred to as the Marsh boy), brought the total number of males in the area to ten.

We remain hopeful that Orkirikoi and the Survey Pride will continue to adapt strategies for survival, especially after facing significant challenges in recent months and to the different incoming males in the area.





ISANCHU PRIDE

This pride name is coined from Isaaten and Nashulai Conservancy where they first were observed. The pride was started by a breakaway group from the Maji ya Fisi pride. We recently sighted some members of the Isanchu pride having moved to the National Reserve. During a recent sighting, we observed a lactating female among the group seen both in Isaaten Conservancy and the National Reserve. Currently, the pride has split into

two smaller groups. One group ranges between Isaaten, Nashulai, and the National Reserve, while the second group, consisting of three adult females, including Nailois (a collared female), roams between Isaaten, Ololosurai, and the Enkopiro Camp valley.

In recent past, the three Enesikiria males have been frequently spotted in both Isaaten and Siana conservancies which might have pressured Lokoman's son, Olopi, and his companion (the Isanshu Pride males), to expand their territory into the Reserve. The pride males have been seen with some of the lactating females, and we recorded their presence in both the National Reserve and Isaaten Conservancy.

INSELBERG MALES

The remaining four Inselberg males, also referred to as the Ngiri Are males, Ruka, Nusu, Olorpolosie and Manywele have been a dominant force from the first time we encountered them in 2018. It is not clear where they originated from but our first encounter with them was along the Kenya-Tanzania border on the Mara Triangle side and they must have come from the neighbouring Serengeti National Park.

The Inselberg Males have been with the Nasipa pride, Egyptian Goose pride and the Purungat pride, just to name a few. Sometime last year they were sighted moving back and forth between the Mara Triangle and the Reserve mostly around the Lookout area. They however have not taken over any pride on the Reserve side, but they had a conflict with the Kaskaz males recently and Ruka seemed to have sustained some injuries. His coalition partners were not far from him, so he should be fine.



SERENA-NORTH BREAKAWAY (RONGAI) PRIDE

The Serena North breakaway pride, also known as the Rongai Pride, originally dispersed from Serena North/Paradise pride. This pride ranges along the Hammerkop

stream in the National Reserve. Currently, the pride consists of seven adult females and ten dependent sub-adults.



The two remaining Black Rock males, Oloshipa and Oloimina, are controlling the pride. Following the death of Lolkulup, their former male partner, Oloshipa and Oloimina were seen chasing away the pride's sub-adult males, who have now reached dispersal age.

Additionally, Oloimina was recently observed mating with a female from the Maji ya Fisi pride in the Maji ya Fisi area, a known hotspot for human-wildlife conflict due to illegal grazing within the National Reserve.



SIX PACK MONIKO MALES

The Six Moniko males, also known as the Six Pack or Bila Shaka males, were born in 2014 within the Moniko Pride in Olare Motorogi Conservancy. After dispersing, they formed a strong coalition that allowed them to defend their territories for years. However, their numbers declined from the original six after one male disappeared when they crossed into the Mara Triangle, and another succumbed to a territorial fight, leaving only four remaining males.

Despite this, the Moniko males-maintained dominance over prides in both the Mara Triangle and the National Reserve. Over the years, they have controlled several key prides, including the Marsh Pride, River Pride, Rekero and Paradise/Serena North Prides. This coalition has also expanded its range to the Rhino Ridge area, encroaching on the Topi Pride's territory.

Interestingly, near Rhino Ridge, three of the four males were observed mating simultaneously with females from the Rekero Pride and later with the Paradise/Serena North Pride. Meanwhile, the Topi Pride has moved toward the border of the National Reserve and OMC, while the Moniko males have found relative stability around Rhino Ridge and Paradise Plains along the Mara River's main crossing.

So far, they have fathered the current cubs within the Rekero Pride and the Paradise/Serena North Pride. Notably, dispersing sub-adult males from the neighbouring Topi Pride have recently been seen with the Marsh females within the Marsh Pride's territory, an area that was previously part of the Six Pack's territorial range.

REKERO PRIDE

The Rekero pride has been thriving in recent months, and this is attributed to the return of the Six Pack males to the area. After leaving the Marsh pride and crossing into the Mara Triangle some time ago, these males returned to the Marsh but did not stay for long. They moved towards the Paradise Plains where they sired cubs with the Serena North Pride (Paradise Pride).

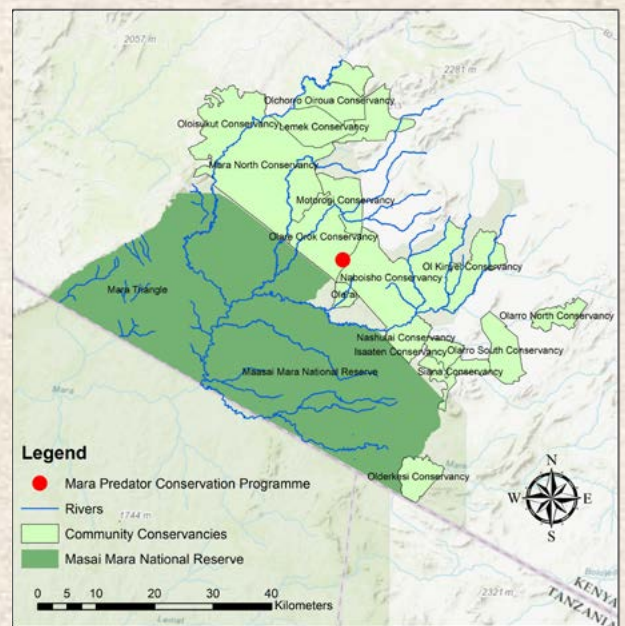
They also took control of the Rekero pride from Olchore and Kijana. The Six Pack males, Chongo, Kiok, Koshoke, and Kibogoyo are currently spending most of their time with the Rekero pride providing security to youngsters within the Pride.



PURUNGAT

The Purungat Pride is one of the prides within the Mara Triangle. The pride currently consists of five adult females, three sub-adult males, and four sub-adult females, all sired by the Inselberg males. Their territory extends along the Mara River, from Purungat to the Eland area (near Serena Lodge) and further to Maji Machafu.

An interesting observation about this pride is that the young males appear to be maneless. During our recent intensive monitoring survey, the pride was sighted ranging from U-Crossing to Maji Machafu general areas. The Purungat Pride is currently being controlled by the Inselberg males, Ruka, Nusu, Mkia, and Manywele.



MAP

Our study area covers the Greater Mara Ecosystem (~ 3000 km²) in the south-western corner of Kenya.

We work in both the National Reserve and the surrounding conservancies.

For more information, please visit our website or follow us on social media. If you have photos and a lion story that you would like to share in the next update, please email us at info@marapredatorconservation.org



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