



## Lion Prides of Olare Motorogi

### Moniko Pride

The Moniko pride is, undoubtedly, the most successful pride in the Conservancy. They are the main lion attraction and a formidable pride that has successfully raised many cubs over the seasons. The latest count for this pride is eighteen, with seven cubs, spread around their territory which sits in the very heart of the Conservancy. Two dominant males – Baranoti and Lolpopit – roam between the lionesses keeping the pride intact and ensuring the next generation.

In 2010 they had such a good year that the pride grew to a total of 28 lions and subsequently split when the annual migration went south and the larder was left a little wanting for 28 mouths. At the same time the two old males, Lose Tooth (named because for nearly a year he had one canine that dangled after a fierce fight) and his side kick, were deposed by Lolpopit (named for the tear in his ear) and Barnoti (Maa for the hairy one). The new pair took over the core of a pride of six females and nine cubs. Luckily the Moniko mums have a fearsome reputation and they left the cubs alone. The males were pushed out of the pride when they came of age and are regularly seen causing trouble with other prides in the Reserve.

Today the Moniko pride are back up to 18 strong – 2 males, 6 females and 10 adolescent cubs, 7 small cubs and more possibly on the way. They rule this prime territory with Barnoti and Lolpopit stealing off to elope with the girls next door whenever they get the opportunity.

This pride can often be seen as they leave their headquarters on Moniko hill followed by a stream of tumbling cubs.

More information and recent updates of Moniko: <http://www.mmconservancy.com/wildlifeconservancy/prides/moniko-pride/>

### Enkoyanai Pride

After an initial rocky start in 2006 and 2007 at the beginning of the Conservancy, four lionesses from a persecuted, cattle-rustling pride found refuge on the western boundary of the Conservancy. These girls were soon joined by two large males who took over the pride as theirs. By 2008 the pride had produced ten cubs during the migration season, a time of plenty, but hit hard times shortly after the herds of wildebeest and zebra moved south.

There was a month when we thought that we would lose all the cubs to starvation as they were looking very thin and forlorn. There were calls from visitors to feed the pride, however, as there was still prey in the area and their lean condition appeared to be due to poor parenting the Management let nature take its course whilst keeping a close eye on their plight. The cruel-to-be-kind approach worked as the females of the pride driven by hunger started to hunt. Over the next few lean months they only lost two of the eight cubs, a better than average cub survival rate. In the following years we have never had a repeat performance as the pride appears to have learnt the lesson that food only lands in your lap during the annual wildebeest migration and you have to work for dinner the rest of the year.

Today, having raised several litters of cubs to maturity and restocked the surrounding areas with offshoots of the pride, the core members are now 18 strong and a second formidable force in the Conservancy. They have pushed into the Moniko pride territory and are now quite comfortable occupying the western half of the Con-



servancy. In 2011 they expanded their sphere of influence up to the Motorogi Spring where they discovered the larder was better stocked during the March to June lean period. This has put pressure on the smaller Lokuro pride which is now squeezed towards the Conservancy's northern boundary by the Enkoyanai heavyweights.

### Olare Motorogi Map

<http://www.mmconservancy.com/wildlifeconservancy/map-2/>

### Olare Motorogi Research Collaboration

<http://www.mmconservancy.com/wildlifeconservancy/bush-news/research-and-collaboration/>

The Olare Motorogi Conservancy fully supports a collaborative approach with regards to all research that is relevant to sustaining its ecosystem for the benefit of the pastoralist landowners and their coexistence with the resident wildlife.

Currently the Conservancy hosts Living with Lions (LWL) <http://www.lionconservation.org/mara-predator-project.html> who monitor lion populations across the region.

Their data and knowledge of pride relationships, habits and territories are essential to the Conservancy's management team when planning the Conservancy's controlled grazing. Camp guides and visitors are encouraged to report lion sightings and to send photos to LWL's online database of lions:

<http://www.livingwithlions.org/mara/>

The Conservancy has also facilitated data collection on:

- Vulture population and migration routes,
- Wildebeest collaring to study movement habits of the lesser known Loita migration,
- Antelope communication,
- Nutritional values of natural grass land as fodder for wildlife and livestock, and the
- Socio-economic studies on the effects and economic benefits of conservation on pastoral communities.