

You Win Some, You Lose Some

By [Nic Squires](#)

A given in the bush is that you will never foretell what you will see or experience the next day. Presently at the end of May dry times are certainly upon us. We have already lived through the change of seasons, and have marvelled at the stunning array of autumn colours the veldt delivers. Another given is that we will see more transition as spring approaches.

The presence of water at this time of the year may certainly enhance ones chances of seeing game. A good option in this regard is the western boundary of Bushman Wilderness trail. The Nsikazi River is still flowing and accounts for a lot of animal presence throughout the day. We often drive to it in the afternoons and take what ever is on offer.

On a previous trail in May, we came across some vultures perched in some trees adjacent the river. Inspection of the area produced the carcass of a kudu cow, which had been killed by a male leopard. We sat patiently for as long as light would permit, but unfortunately did not get sight of this reclusive predator. Nervous feeding of few vultures surely meant the Tom wasn't far away. Earlier on in the day on our morning walk we came across tracks of 2 Black Rhino, and were convinced we had a reasonable chance of viewing them. The 2 piles of dung they left behind were definitely fresh. One pile was kicked and was accompanied by urine scrapes, suggesting a mature bull, and the other untouched and discreetly to the side of the game path suggesting a female animal. Thus 2 moments of huge potential never materialised.

On yet another occasion in the same vicinity along the river we tracked up a big herd of Buffalo and upon viewing them, saw the same leopard male playing cat and mouse with the buffalo. The predatory response of Buffalo is to bunch up and confront the intruder with a show of aggression and strength in numbers. This they duly did and the leopard turned tail and fled.

If you add things up there will certainly be a lot more successes and failures. We are all guilty of focussing on the end product and letting it be the deciding factor in evaluating our trip to the bush. Instead there is so much more to the experience, such as the learning aspect leading up to any end result or success. Processing any tracks or sign suggesting something is going on is a challenge on its own and a whole lot of fun to boot. This can be done in the exclusivity of the parks wilderness areas on our wilderness trail activities.