



# Rhino Drama in the Mara

Much to our astonishment, an adult female Black Rhino took up residence on the plains adjacent to Kichwa Tembo in October 1998. The small population of these endangered animals typically occur in the dense Croton thickets of the eastern Masai Mara National Reserve, so it was a big surprise to see this individual way over in the west. With lion, leopard, buffalo and elephant all encountered on a regular basis, Kichwa is now known as 'Big Five Country'!

On 26 October, the Serena Lion pride of three lionesses and four cubs ambushed a subadult zebra. Before they had suffocated the zebra, the resident Black Rhino emerged from a nearby thicket and chased the pride off. The zebra was badly injured so could not rise and run away, and to our amazement it was then set upon by the rhino. The belligerent rhino gored the zebra with her horn and tossed it into the air. She did this twice and the zebra was dead. Not content with having chased off the lions, the rhino guarded over the dead zebra for several hours before it became too hot to stand out in the full sun.

On a night drive on 15 November, James Morinte and Philip Keter watched the same rhino attack a golden-maned lion of the Kichwa Pride, while he was in the process of mating with one of the lionesses. The lion was impaled through the neck and flank and died two days later.

The unexpected arrival of this rhino in our area has provided much excitement and - despite its hostility towards lions - we hope that she remains and perhaps attracts a mate.

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*Joseph Masibo, Kichwa Tembo, Kenya*