

Serengeti

national park

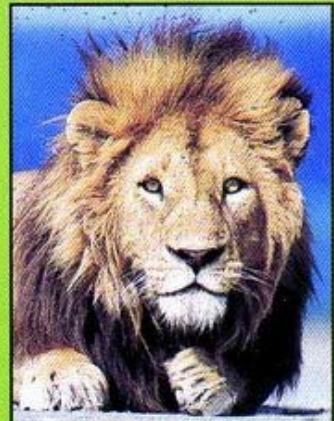
Park History

The name Serengeti comes from the Maasai word "Siringet" referring to an "endless plain." As you stand on the southern grass plains, you experience this vastness, and can witness one of the greatest concentrations of plains animals left on earth.

And yet the Serengeti is much more - nearly 2/3 of the park is bush or woodland!

The plains were formed 3-4 million years ago when ash blown from volcanoes in the Ngorongoro highlands covered the rolling landscape. This thick layer of ash preserved traces of early man, and established the rich soil which supports the southern grass plains. From this early beginning, man and wildlife have shared this magical place.

The Serengeti was first inhabited by ancient hunter gatherers and more recently pastoralists. The waves of agriculturists who entered the area during the last century mostly avoided the Serengeti as the woodlands were full of tsetse flies inflicting their livestock with sleeping sickness, and the plains were controlled by the Maasai. The colonists who arrived by the early 1900's found a land virtually untouched, and exploited it for its exceptional hunting opportunities, particularly lion, leopard, and buffalo.



In recognition of the need to preserve this special area, the central Serengeti was declared a Game Reserve in 1929. In 1951, the Reserve became Tanganyika's first national park, and in those days included the Ngorongoro crater. Further alteration in 1959 resulted in the Park boundaries you see today. Part of the Serengeti plains and the highlands were removed and added to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, while extensions to the north and south were included to provide more protection to the wildebeest migration.

Covering 14,763 square kilometres, the Park is roughly the size of Northern Ireland or Connecticut, making it Tanzania's largest national park. The Park is the centre of the Serengeti ecosystem. Roughly defined by the annual wildebeest migration, the Serengeti ecosystem is expansive - an area of

25-30,000 square kilometres. It is the combination of Serengeti National Park with its buffer zones - Ngorongoro Conservation Area, four Game Reserves, one Game Controlled Area and Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve - that protects the largest single movement of wildlife on earth.

The Park strives to improve its facilities for all who come to see, study, or photograph the animals in this dynamic place. Since Serengeti National Park's creation, Tanzania has added an additional 11 national parks. Serengeti remains one of the most important jewels in the National Park's crown. Each year the Park generates more revenue than it spends; the remainder goes to support other national parks which are not yet self-sufficient.

Thank you for your support.



western corridor

Grumeti

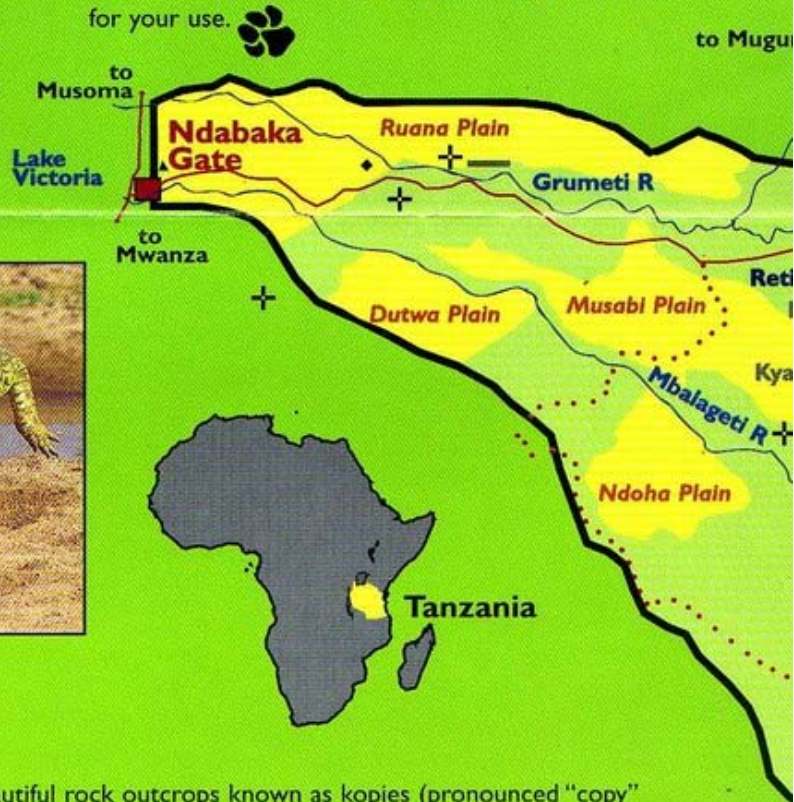
Stretching almost to the shores of Lake Victoria, the reach of the Western Corridor is important in preserving ancient migratory routes. In a typical year, the migration arrives between June and July, having left the dry plains in the south. Here the migrants mix with many resident herbivores, including topi, giraffe, and buffalo. There is also a resident population of wildebeest!

Supporting lush riverine forest, the Grumeti River provides a sharp contrast to the surrounding plains and hosts some of the Serengeti's more unusual species, such as the black and white colobus monkey.

It is the river's population of giant Nile crocodiles at Kirawira that has made this area famous. Growing up to 6 metres in length and with unusually thick set jaws, their lives are inextricably linked with the great

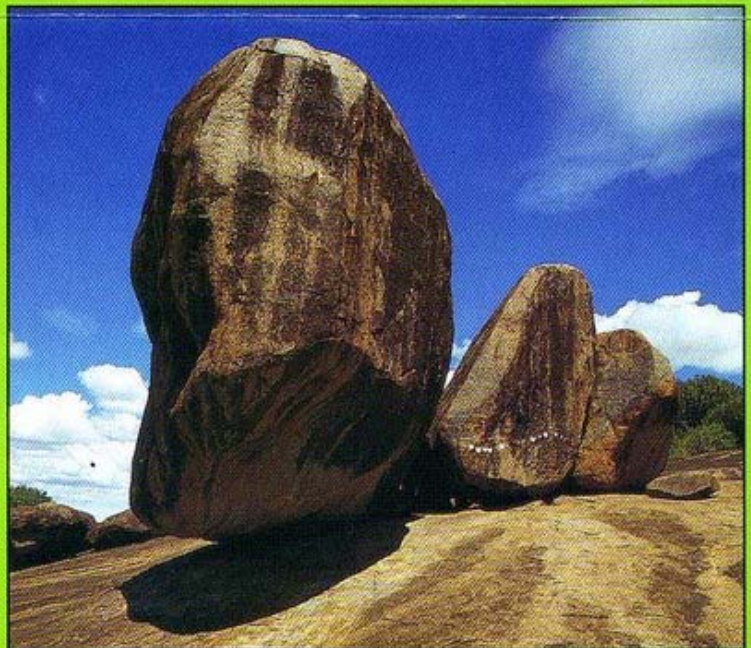
migration. Moving with surprising stealth and speed, they prey upon the thirsty herds as they drink from the river. This time of plenty for the crocodiles will sustain them until the herds return next year.

The Western Corridor offers more than just an annual stop-off point for the migration. Its colourful topography of hills, rivers and flood plains provides year-round habitat for many of the Serengeti's species. This area is best visited from June through October, as access in the rainy season is difficult. Wilderness campsites, permanent tented camps and crocodile/hippopotamus viewing "hides" are available for your use.



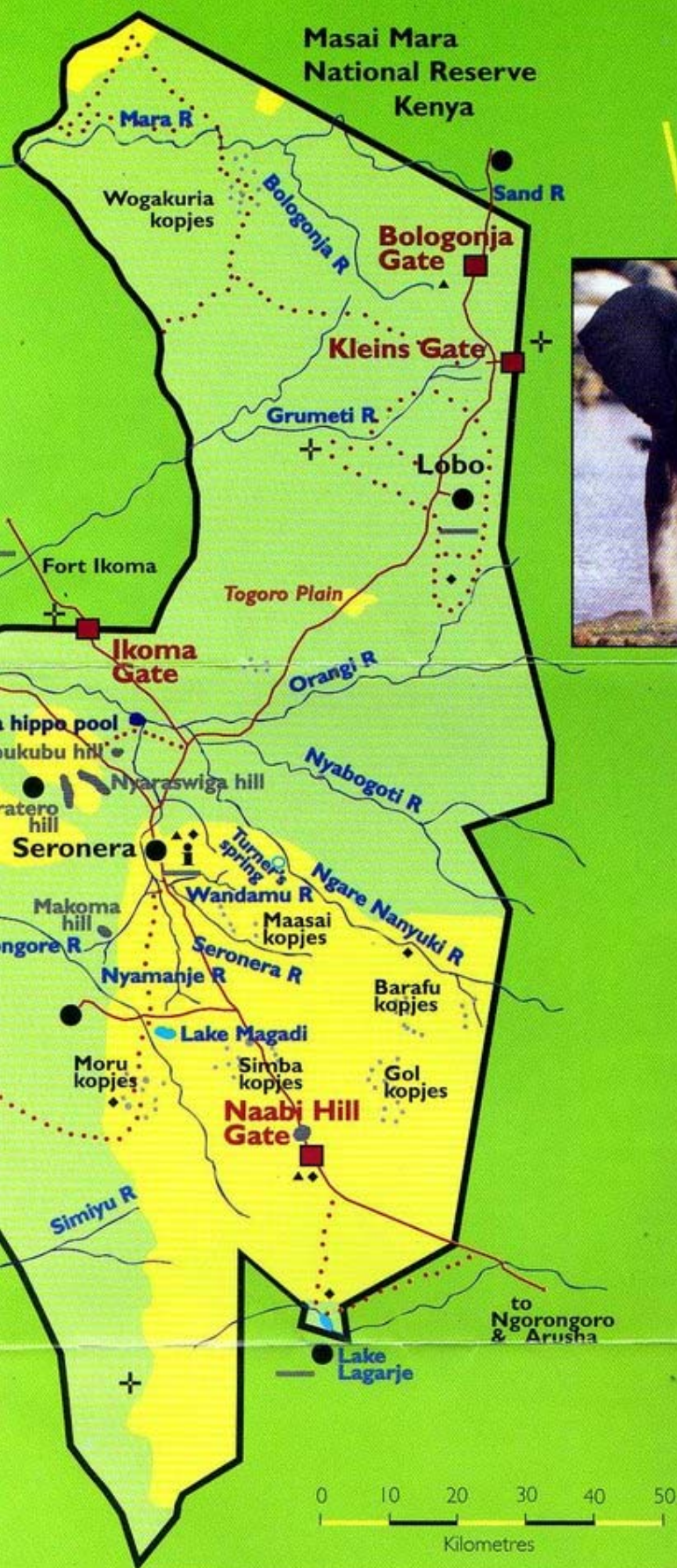
The Serengeti would not be the same without the beautiful rock outcrops known as kopjes (pronounced "copy" from the Dutch meaning "little head"). Technically known as inselbergs, the intriguing rounded shapes of these ancient granite rocks are the result of cracking and erosion from exposure to sun, wind, and rain. They provide shelter and capture water for a wealth of wildlife and plants. In fact, without such environs, lions and other large animals would be unable to survive the dry season on the plains.

The main groups of kopjes are: Barafu, Gol, Maasai, Loliondo, Simba and Moru. Each has its own individual beauty. Moru kopjes are outstanding for their size and profusion of resident wildlife including lion, leopard, serval, caracal and even rhinoceros and elephant. There are early Maasai paintings still visible at Moru, and a special rock used for making music! Gol and Barafu kopjes provide important habitat for cheetah, and are used by wildebeest in the wet season. Maasai and Loliondo kopjes provide outlooks for resident lion, and large cobras can often be seen sunning themselves on the rocks. Simba kopjes support a great variety of animals and birds including giraffe, baboon and lion (simba) for which they are named. These are the easiest to reach of all the kopjes, as they are along the main road to Seronera.



Kopjes

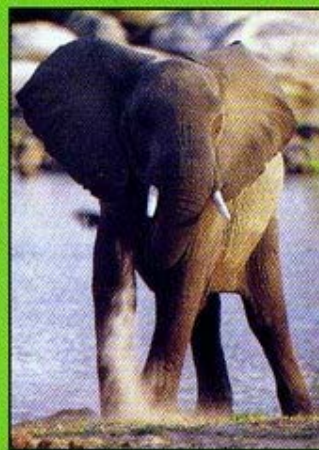
rocks



	Visitor Centre		Lake
	Lodge		Kopje
	Park gate		Hill
	Wilderness campsite		Road
	Public campsite		River
	Perm. tented camp		Park track
	Grassland		Airstrip
	Woodland/Bush		Park border

W

ildebeest move through the northern woodlands in most years from June-December to feed on the longer grasses that persist in this area. Their range



during this time extends north into Masai Mara. Rocky hills, rivers and woodlands typify this scenic area. There is a diversity of resident wildlife - look out for klip-springers and pythons on the kopjes, as well as elephants in the woodland.

There are wilderness campsites, a lodge, airstrip, permanent tented camp, and extensive game viewing tracks. Although an interesting place to visit all year round, it is best from June through December when the migrants occur.

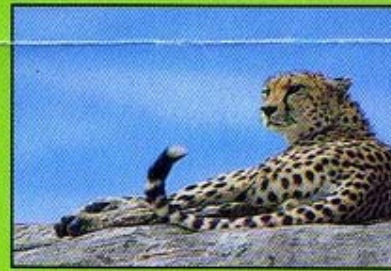


T

he southern grass plains are some of the most productive and nutritious natural grasslands in the world. When the short rains start in November, the wildebeest move south from the northern woodlands. They move to exploit the short grass plains, where the grasses are rich in the minerals they need to rear their young. In February/March one of wildlife's most amazing spectacles occurs. For 3-4 weeks, 90% of the female wildebeest give birth, flooding the plains with thousands of newborn calves each day.

The wildebeest may remain on the plains for several months, where they share these productive grasslands with migratory zebra, Thomson's gazelle, and eland, as well as the many residents including the Grant's gazelle, topi, and hartebeest. The plains are also used by migratory birds including the white stork, pallid harrier, and peregrine falcon.

When the rains stop, the plains dry out rapidly forcing the herds to migrate west and north once again. Their departure in May/June marks another great spectacle. The wildebeest march in long, meandering lines that stretch for miles, or bunch into herds of thousands. These are the scenes that typify "the migration." The southern plains are best visited from December to May when the migrants are there.



Serengeti National Park provides wilderness campsites on the edge of Lake Lagarje (also called Nduu). There are also campsites around Lake Masek in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, together with a lodge and an airstrip. Payments to Serengeti National Park for access to this area must be made at Naabi Hill Gate.



Seronera

The Seronera Valley is an important transition zone between the southern plains and the northern woodlands. It provides a rich mosaic of habitats criss-crossed by rivers, the most prominent of which is the Seronera River from which the area takes its name. With year-round water, this is perhaps the most reliable area in the park to view wildlife. It is possible to see many of the Serengeti's resident wildlife including giraffe, buffalo, topi, hartebeest, waterbuck, impala, reedbuck, bushbuck, dikdik, hippopotamus, crocodile, warthog and diverse birdlife. Large prides of lion reside here, as well as clans of spotted hyaena. The more elusive leopard is also common here but less easy to spot! The river tracks offer the best chance to see a leopard, which will usually rest in the branches of acacia or sausage trees. Cheetah can also be seen here as well as serval and caracal.

With an excellent network of game tracks, camping and lodge facilities, Seronera is a good area to visit for those who want to make the most of a short safari. Seronera also has the Serengeti Visitor Centre, which offers an interesting outdoor interpretive walk, lunch-time presentations, and a gift and coffee shop. The Serengeti Research Institute is based here. Since 1966 scientists have carried out extensive research on the Serengeti ecosystem, which has made it one of the most studied areas in the world.



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One of the last great ecosystems in the world, the Serengeti faces many threats to its survival. The most serious are poaching and the ever increasing demand for land to feed a large and growing human population that borders the park. Your behaviour can be as damaging as that of a poacher's snare. Driving off road where it is not allowed damages the fragile soils and plants of the Serengeti, and can disturb species such as cheetah during critical breeding periods. You can help to preserve the Serengeti and its spectacular wildlife by respecting our rules and regulations, so that in the words of a famous patron - "Serengeti Shall Not Die."

- Keep to the 50 kph speed limit. This is for your safety and the safety of all wildlife.
- Driving at night is not allowed (7 p.m. to 6 a.m.).

- Stay on the roads/tracks except where you are specifically allowed to drive off-road.
- If your vehicle weighs more than 2000 kg, you must not drive off-road in any part of the Park.
- Be considerate of the wildlife - do not harass, feed or interfere with wildlife.
- Act accordingly - do not get out of, stand on, or hang out of vehicles near any animal.
- Leave all plants, animals, skulls, bones, rocks or any objects in the Park where they belong.
- Do not bring any animal or plant into the Park.
- Please make sure to either take your trash with you, or dispose of it properly. Extinguish your cigarettes in your vehicle's ashtray.
- Do not start fires unless at authorised camps.
- Remember that the Park's gates open at 6 a.m. and close at 6 p.m.

Park
rules & regulations