

Tanzania Trip Report

Mammal List

Common Wildebeest	Hippopotamus	Bush Hyrax
Plains Zebra	African Cape Buffalo	Rock Hyrax
Giraffe	Warthog	Common Genet
Thomson's Gazelle	Topi	Golden Jackal
Grant's Gazelle	Hartebeest	Black-backed Jackal
Eland	Olive Baboon	Lion
Waterbuck	Vervet Monkey	Leopard
Kirk's Dik Dik	Blue Monkey	Cheetah
Savannah Elephant	Banded Mongoose	Spotted Hyena
Impala	Dwarf Mongoose	
Black Rhino	Common Slender Mongoose	

After consulting with the mammalwatching experts, visiting Tanzania seemed like the most logical destination for my first big mammalwatching excursion. It's safe to say they delivered. My brother teasingly called it a "fringe religious pilgrimage" based on my level of excitement. There's no sense in writing a long-winded write up so I have broke down the list of each park and some of the highlights at each spot. I appreciate Jon, Charles, and Dr. Shumaker from the Indianapolis Zoo on giving some advice. 31 mammal species called for plenty of celebration.



Tarangire NP List

Plains Zebra	Waterbuck	Vervet Monkey
Common Wildebeest	Kirk's Dik Dik	Blue Monkey*
Giraffe	Savanah Elephant	Dwarf Mongoose
Thomson's Gazelle	Warthog	Banded Mongoose
Impala	Bush Hyrax	Lion
Eland	Olive Baboon	

*Technically we saw the Blue Monkey at our accommodation in Arusha but with it being the first mammal we saw, I added it here.



-Being the first place we went, everything we saw for the first time led to instant excitement. After being in the NP for 5 minutes, we saw a herd of Impala and a troop of Olive Baboons and you would've thought our truck hit the lottery based on our reaction. After a few days, it was like "should we even slow down?"

-Had the chance to talk to our guide at lunch and had to humble brag about knowing Dr. Charles Foley and saying I have talked to him a time or two. That brought my credibility with our guide up considerably. It would've been equivalent of talking to someone in Indiana and saying you know Larry Bird.

-First time seeing a pride of lions was very memorable. Especially because these females were hanging out in a tree during the afternoon.



Charles Foley territory.



Ngorongoro Crater List

Savannah Elephant	Warthog	African Lion
Black Rhino	Eland	Spotted Hyena
Hippopotamus	African Cape Buffalo	Golden Jackal
Wildebeest	Plains Zebra	
Impala	Giraffe	
Thomson's Gazelle	Olive Baboon	
Grant's Gazelle	Vervet Monkey	

- The Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Crater itself were spectacular. The drive in through the thick forest and mist to then to suddenly reach a clearing and get a glimpse of the crater before getting enveloped in the forest again was a special experience.
- I was able to provide a good laugh to one of the local fellas working at the park when I did a double take at the toilet just being a hole in the ground with a cord to pull to flush. I did my best impression of a baseball catcher and he laughed and gave me the thumbs up. When in Rome.
- Being stuck in traffic is usually a pain in the ass, but getting stuck because two female lionesses have laid in the road directly in front and behind your car wasn't so bad. We spent 30 minutes until one of the ladies waltzed off and gave us her blessing to leave.
- We did get the opportunity to see a Black Rhino, although at a pretty good distance. Experiencing conservation in the wild and seeing that resilience is pretty special. (Just wouldn't have minded it 50 yards closer.)





Black Rhino off in the distance if you squint your eyes.



One of my favorite mammals.

Serengeti NP List

Waterbuck	Thomson's Gazelle	Olive Baboon	African Lion
Plains Zebra	Grant's Gazelle	Rock Hyrax	Leopard
Giraffe	Hippopotamus	Common Spotted Genet	Spotted Hyena
Kirk's Dik Dik	Wildebeest	Banded Mongoose	
Hartebeest	Savannah Elephant	Common Slender Mongoose	
Topi	African Cape Buffalo	Black-backed Jackal	
Impala	Vervet Monkey	Cheetah	



-Not sure if there is a way to really sum up the emotion and feeling of being in the Serengeti. This was my personal favorite and was even more than I expected after spending countless hours reading and watching documentaries about the place.

-Within a four hour window, we saw Lions, Leopards, Spotted Hyenas, and Cheetahs (all with young except for the leopard.)

-The scenery and backdrop of the Serengeti took my breath away. Everywhere you turned your head, it really was the “endless plains.”



Pure Serengeti



Final Takeaways

- Truly a trip of a lifetime. Leaving with so much gratitude for the opportunity to experience a dream I've had for so long.
- The wildlife was incredible, but the people were even better. The Tanzanians were incredibly kind and full of a joy that radiated to everyone else. Some of the Maasai were recruiting my brother and I to join them, and I still feel half-way tempted.
- My brother was leaning towards birds more than mammals throughout the trip. Need Jon Hall & co. to be ready for the intervention.
- Where to next?

