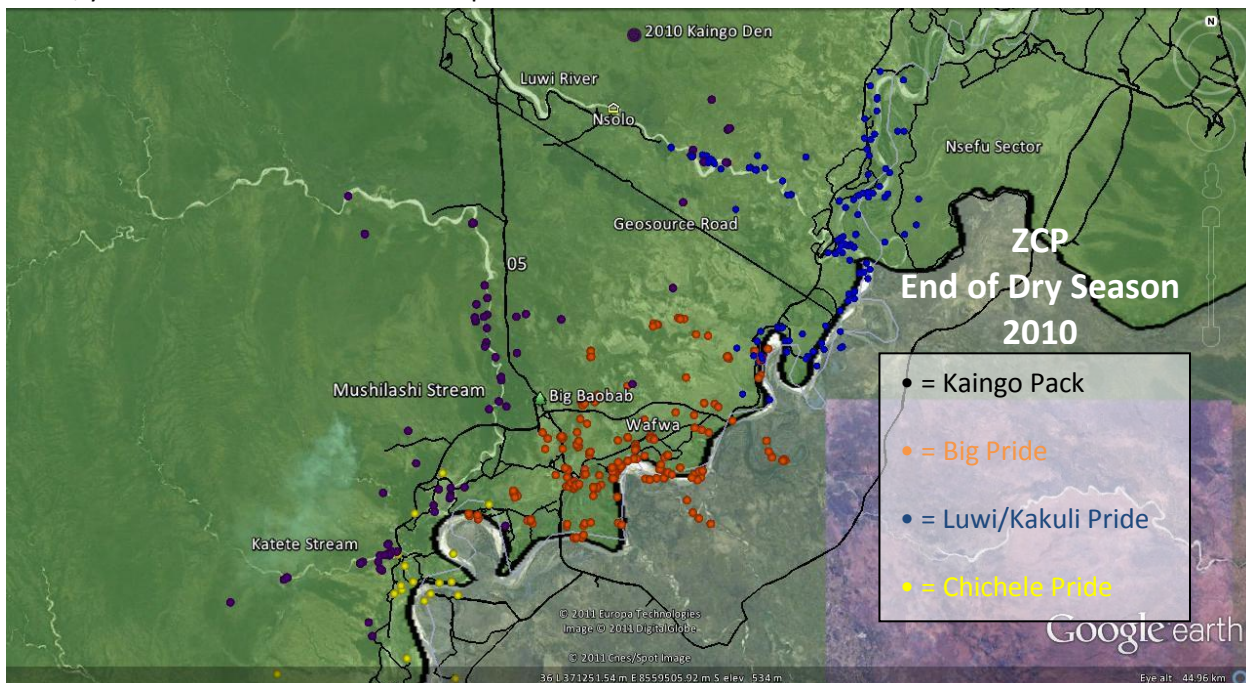


Guides Update - November 2011

The Status of Kaingo Pack

In late April Kaingo pack denned north of the main game area, emerged in August with five pups, and now has four 5-month old male pups (The female pup has not been seen since September). It is not easy for wild dogs to raise pups as they are often killed by lions and hyenas, which in some areas can decrease pup survival up to 70%. Pups also need food from the pack's adults and yearlings, so bigger packs have greater pup success because they have more members to hunt and watch over them. For Kaingo pack, that means that the 5 adults have to kill to feed 9 dogs for a whole year—a big job!

Why are they sometimes so hard to see in the main game area? While the Kaingo pack's range includes the Main Game Area, they spend the majority of their time in areas of lower game density. This is typical across Africa, and in many areas, including the Luangwa, wild dog populations are higher outside of National Parks. Why might this be? The answer is most likely due to competition with larger, more abundant species. **Lions kill more dogs than any other natural cause (in 2008 Katete pack lost four adult dogs to lion predation and broke apart)**, and hyenas can quickly steal carcasses from dogs. Both lions and hyena numbers are highest where the game density is highest. Consequently dogs (and cheetahs) are considered "fugitive species," in that they tend to avoid competition and interaction with lion and hyena. This is reflected in their biology—unlike lion and hyena who have very loud calls carrying many kilometres, dogs have quiet, birdlike calls to avoid detection. While lion are relatively predictable in their locations and movements dogs unpredictably range ~10km/day and are almost never seen in the same place two days in a row (unless denning). In addition dogs rarely scavenge or stay long on a kill, likely due to the danger of attack by lion. Kaingo pack ranges over thousands of square kilometers and these interactions can be seen in the map below, where Kaingo pack (Purple), Big Pride (Orange), Luwi/Kakuli Pride (Blue), and Chichele Pride (yellow) were at the end of the 2010 dry season. This information came from the collars on the dogs and lions. Notice how Kaingo pack largely avoids the Big Pride and Luwi Pride areas while spending a lot of time in upstream Mushilashi, the Miombo woodland east of the 05, and the mopane scrub north of the Luwi River. They only came into the main game area at the confluences of the Mushilashi and Katete Streams in the northern part of Chichele Prides territory. These movements reflect the complex interactions between carnivore species, and these change across seasons, years and densities of all three species.



'New' lions to the Main Game Area

Chichele males

2 male lions showed up around Chichele Hill in August and have been mating with a female of Chichele pride. ZCP identified one male as a three year old who dispersed 30 km from Tena Pride from Nsefu sector!

Chipela males

Two males were seen around Chipela in July. Those two males were born in the Luwi, or Kakuli, pride in early 2008. Even though there is a clear difference in size they are actually the same age. The smaller of the two can be easily identified by a cut in both his left and right ear.

Chipembele males

Three males showed up near Chipembele I & II in late August and were mating with a female of Luwi/Kakuli pride who is now pregnant. These males were born in 2008 in Nsolo pride, which is found along the 05 and from Nsolo westward.

Ginger and Friends

Ginger and 3 males have been seen moving down south from the Luwi to Mbangula to Wakombe. Ginger is easy to recognize as he is orange in color, his tail tip is orange, and his toe pads are pink. The other members are his brother and the Chipela males (see above), all from Luwi/Kakuli pride. Ginger and his brother were born in July/August 2008.

Newborn cubs in Big Pride

Back in August, Shaka was seen mating with four lionesses in Big Pride, and now at least three of the lionesses have given birth, including the collared female. ZCP has been given reports of 6 to 12 cubs between these three lionesses. When you see these cubs, please note the number of cubs and report to ZCP when possible. Also, please give the cubs space

and view them from a distance. Even if they look relaxed, the cubs are very young and getting close to them will stress them and their mothers.

How to age cubs

When you see a lioness with cubs, it is very helpful if you can get a count and estimate their age. The best way to estimate cub age is looking at how big they are next to their mother. Look at where the cub's head reaches on the mother. At the mother's elbow, a cub is 4 months old. Halfway up the mother's shoulder, the cub is 6 months. Just short of the mother's shoulder is 12 months.



From [A Hunter's Guide to Aging Lions in Eastern and Southern Africa](#) by Karyl L. Whitman and Craig Packer

Thanks for your interest in our programme, and please ask any of our field staff if you have any questions about our work.

See you out there!

The Zambian Carnivore Programme