

## **Project Update: November 2022**

We recently concluded our work in Hwange National Park (HNP) after our team completed another successful season of research. In total, the giraffe population was monitored and studied for a period of 9 months. The data collected from HNP will be valuable to help us gain a better understanding of giraffe in Zimbabwe, which in turn, will enable us to set up improved management plans for these populations.

### **Field Research**

This research forms part of a bigger study in which we compare giraffe ecology and between different areas of Zimbabwe. This will enable us to identify which factors are the drivers of change in giraffe behaviour in and between these two locations. Preliminary analysis of the of our data suggest that giraffe behaviour will differ significantly between our two main study areas. One of the main drivers of change in giraffe behaviour is associated with environmental factors such as, habitat type, resource (food & water) availability and climate. Giraffes are highly adaptable; thus, they can adjust their behaviour to cope with these environmental changes.



### **Future Plans**

As all field work have now finished in Zimbabwe, I will start with the data analysis and write up of my PhD thesis. We will continue to produce seasonal reports for ZimParks on the home ranges/movements of the giraffe in HNP. Ultimately, the main goal is to publish three to four high quality scientific papers from this study and to successfully set up the first ever National Strategy Plan for giraffe conservation in Zimbabwe. Hwange National Park also forms part of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA), and future work is planned to better understand giraffe ecology across the whole KAZA TFCA.



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