

# PAUL STONES SAFARIS AFRICA NEWSLETTER

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## A Forest Fantasy in 2021



2021 is moving along at a rapid rate, as all years do! Today one has to say, "the more things change, the more they stay the same". Here in Africa we carry on pretty much as we always have, we are having an upswing of cases right now, 33000 or so in total, yet this is to be expected and will no doubt crest and trough as the months go by! We are aware of the virus, yet we live life to the full and we are not governed by liberalism, woke minded, socialist fools! We are open to the world, we have our protocols in place and accept that where we are now is where we are going to be for a good while yet to come. We have adopted the mantra of an age old African proverb "the tortoise cannot stay in his shell, for therein, lie the confines to his survival" ( actually just made that one up but pretty accurate )



PSSA kicked off the season in the Cameroon, what an incredible safari it was. I would like to express my gratitude to Micah Du Plooy for all his hard work and assistance and Dave and Maria Rademeyer of Northern Operations for arranging the hunt.

When one asks "what was it like" the analogy I will use is as follows: A woman gets married and children are high on the agenda, she falls pregnant and is elated, she then goes through 9 months of hell and finally gives birth on a day that provides pain we do not understand, humiliation and in all, not a day to be repeated ( apparently ). 6 months later, "honey, lets have another one" !!



Forest hunting is not your traditional African safari, not by a country mile! It is however something that is exceptionally interesting, saying this, if you suffer from claustrophobia, hate the colour green, or are a paid up member of the SPCA ( the dogs are tools and not pets, not well maintained tools, to put it mildly ) I advise that you stay at home!



The hunt was something of legend, we followed 14 bongo bulls over 14 days, on the very first day we tracked a bongo and the dogs bayed it, it was not what we sought and let it go, that was the last one to be bayed over the next while, we lost track, we had bulls enter herds. We covered just under 40km over this time period at an average speed of 0.5 km per hour. We saw forest elephant, gorillas in large numbers, the elusive forest sitatunga that we were fortunate to hunt with success during the safari. The species of monkeys abound and pangolin are a common sight.



On the eve of the 14th day, we were without our quarry! Not an emotion one likes to experience but that is the essence of hunting and heaven knows, we had hunted! Upon entering camp, I enquired as to the time of departure for the charter back to Douala. We were informed that we needed to be at the strip by 11am. I turned to Phil and said we will not be kicking our heels in camp but an early start for one more attempt. At 5h45 we were driving down the road, about 1km from camp and there in that dawn light, was a track in the soft moist soil of a bongo bull. Immediately we decided to follow but needed to wait for the forest to lighten up as it was at that stage still dark under that huge dense canopy. 30 minutes later we were on the track and 15 minutes into the hunt the dogs bayed what would be one of the most spectacular bongo to have been hunted. The emotion was intense and the appreciation even more so.

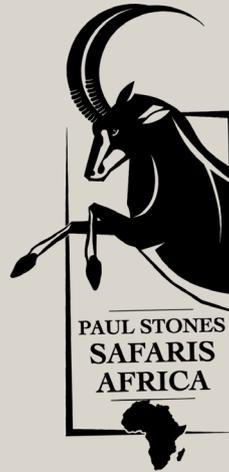
Will I be back ? Give me 6 months!

We now move on to more genteel hunts and with quite a large number of wingshoots coming up, I will no doubt, appreciate those dry, open, blue skyed African days, long walks through open savanna and great food in comfortable camps, a tad more than a week ago. For those that might still consider an adventure this year, we do have some fantastic plains game hunting available. Our Northern Mozambique quota in the Niassa Game Reserve is about sold out and we thank you all for the efforts made to come with us. We do miss all the regular friends that have not been able to make it to date, we hope that your respective governments will at some point see the light and allow you all to do what is your God given right and that is to LIVE!



Until next time stay safe and oh, try and stay sane, which is no doubt the harder of the two right now!

Best to you all  
Paul



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