Day 11, Tuesday, 18 Dec 2001

Chege to the Rescue

We spent the morning doing behavior studies on the PZ. It was great fun using foals as our focals, except that Colleen's foal moved out of sight about half way through the exercise.

After lunch, we stopped at the office to pick up Chege and then to go do our two transects in the Isiolo Valley. By radio, Chege found out that the elephants had moved on, so off we went with the best of hopes. When we got there we discovered there were rhinos in the area once again. We went on to the second transect and completed it satisfactory. When we came back to the first transect site, we decided that the rhinos, being white and a little ways off, were not an immediate threat although they would certainly bear watching. Tom and I and Bel and Chege were working with the pin to identify and collect grasses. About half way through the transect, Chege said, "Look, there is a lion." Bel said she thought it was a GZ, but Chege started back to the truck. Tom and I immediately turned to go with him, but he reassured us that he was only going to get binoculars from the truck and that we were quite safe from "Simba" who was 400 yards away. We actually saw 2 lions with 2 rhinos between them. We later heard that the rhinos were chasing and harassing the lions.

On our way home, we came across "Priscilla" without "Little Bel." Her udder was quite full. She obviously had not been suckled for many hours and we fear the worst. Grevy's Zebra foal mortality is quite high. We heard of another territorial male GZ taken by lions. This is the second territorial male GZ killing since we have been here and the third in three weeks. One or two lions are no match for a fully grown male GZ, but Lewa has prides of 6 or 8 lions that could manage to take one down.

Additional sightings: a flock of 30 white storks, marshal eagle, speckled pigeon, and D'Arnaud's barbet.