



ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK AUTHORITY WISH TO ALERT COMMUNITIES AND VISITORS ABOUT ELEPHANTS IN THE PARK

iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority would like to alert communities living in and adjacent to the Park and public about the Elephants roaming around Western shores of the Park especially around Dukuduku gate in St. Lucia.

There are Elephants with unusual behaviour spotted grazing on the Western shores section of Lake St. Lucia. The Park is a home of untamed wild animals that can cause damage to property, inflict injury, and even cause death to human beings. You are therefore strongly urged and advised to be alert when walking or driving around the park, to stay inside your vehicles except in designated areas and stay away from animals.

Safety of communities neighbouring the park is our number one priority, therefore iSimangaliso urges adults to keep an eye on children as they visit the Park during these school holiday to ensure their safety whilst enjoying the magnificent park fauna and flora experiences. We would like to draw your attention to the following safety measures to ensure that communities and visitors are safe, and the park visit becomes a memorable one. The park has approximately 110 Elephants on the Eastern/ Western shores section of the Park. Elephants are naturally a huge drawcard for tourists however we urge visitors to exercise caution when encountering Elephants.

Please be advised that anywhere in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, sitting on the back of an open vehicle or in a vehicle with no roof and/or sides is not permitted due to the dangers posed by wild animals and in particular Elephants. A reasonable distance should be maintained from Elephants (50 metres) and guests may not get out of the vehicles or lean out of windows for any reason including the taking of photographs.

You are referred to Regulations 15 and 16: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: PROTECTED AREAS ACT 57 OF 2003 (Gazette No. 26025, Notice No.181, 1 November 2004) REGULATIONS FOR THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF SPECIAL NATURE RESERVES,

NATIONAL PARKS AND WORLD HERITAGE SITES (Government Notice R1061, Government Gazette 28181, 28 October 2005), as amended and the criminal sanctions concerning a breach of the said regulations.

Should you encounter any negative behaviour or misbehaviour by other park users around the park, please record vehicle details, take photographs and contact the iSimangaliso emergency phone **0827977944**. iSimangaliso has posted safety notice about this matter to keep communities and visitors aware about these Elephants.

HOW TO APPROACH AND BEHAVE NEAR ELEPHANTS WHEN IN A VEHICLE

ALWAYS:

- Slow down as soon as you see Elephants
- Switch off the engine, sit quietly and enjoy the Elephants
- Keep an eye on both sides and the rear of the vehicle for approaching Elephants
- Make sure you can easily drive away from the sighting
- Allow the Elephants a clear path away from the area
- Give the Elephants space to move off the road before driving past them
- Retreat slowly if the Elephants are showing any signs of unease or mild threat
- Drive away slowly and quietly if they continue to show any threatening behaviour
- Give a musth bull (evident by dark, oily secretions on either side of the head) lots of space (more than 50m); their testosterone levels make them short tempered
- Reverse if a musth bull is in front of you; don't drive past or let him walk towards you
- If any Elephants displays aggressive behaviour such as rushing towards a vehicle, tusking the ground, throwing sand/ branches at you or trumpeting loudly) always play it safe and retreat.

NEVER:

- Never rush up to the Elephants
- Never drive closer than 50 metres to the nearest Elephants
- Never park your car over any Elephants footpaths leading off from the road
- Never box the Elephants in when other vehicles are present
- Never cut off or block Elephants from the direction they are walking
- Never drive or park between members of the Elephants herd
- Never drive for extended periods when Elephants are walking along the road

- Never rev the engine when Elephants are present
- Never try to push Elephants off the road
- Never speed past Elephants or drive faster than Elephants generally walk (6km/ hour)
- Never drive off the road or leave your vehicle to get closer to Elephants
- Never make any noises or fast, jerky movements to attract their attention
- Never hang out of windows or sunroofs around Elephants

RATHER BE SAFE THAN SORRY. AN ELEPHANT IS A FORMIDABLE GIANT. RESPECT THEM AND THEIR SPACE.

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Statement issued by iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

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