WILD FRONTIERS
EXPLORE dream DISCOVER

THE MIGRATION EXPLAINED

The Migration Explained

For many people, the aim of a trip to Tanzania or Kenya is to see the "Great Migration".

Not everyone realises that the migration is not a once-off event, but rather a continuous year round process, with each step of the journey providing safari goers with a uniquely different experience.

The movement of the herds depends on a great many aspects, with rainfall being just one of them. The timing, duration and intensity of the showers has a direction effect on water quality and grazing.

This is why you can sometimes be in the "right" place (according to some map), at the "right" time, and the migration is simply NOT THERE! The herds often move backwards and forwards across the park, sometimes over 40 km overnight. It is not *one* huge herd of animals, but numerous large and small herds, all with their own particular agenda.

When it comes to river crossings - that famous "huge crocodile catches baby zebra" photo we all want – you have to have patience. Often you can sit at a great spot, with a large mass of wildebeest on one bank waiting to cross, and they do nothing for 2 days ...and as soon as you wake up late, or leave your spot for an hour, they will all cross over in 20 minutes and you'll find them standing on the opposite bank, with only a few fat crocs to show where they were!!!! (We once saw a whole wildebeest completely eaten in 4 minutes by 11 crocs on the Grumeti River).

The following migration calendar explains the seasonality of game viewing and should be used as a guideline only when planning your safari to East Africa.

Remember that there is excellent resident game throughout the year in the Serengeti/Ngorongoro eco-systems.

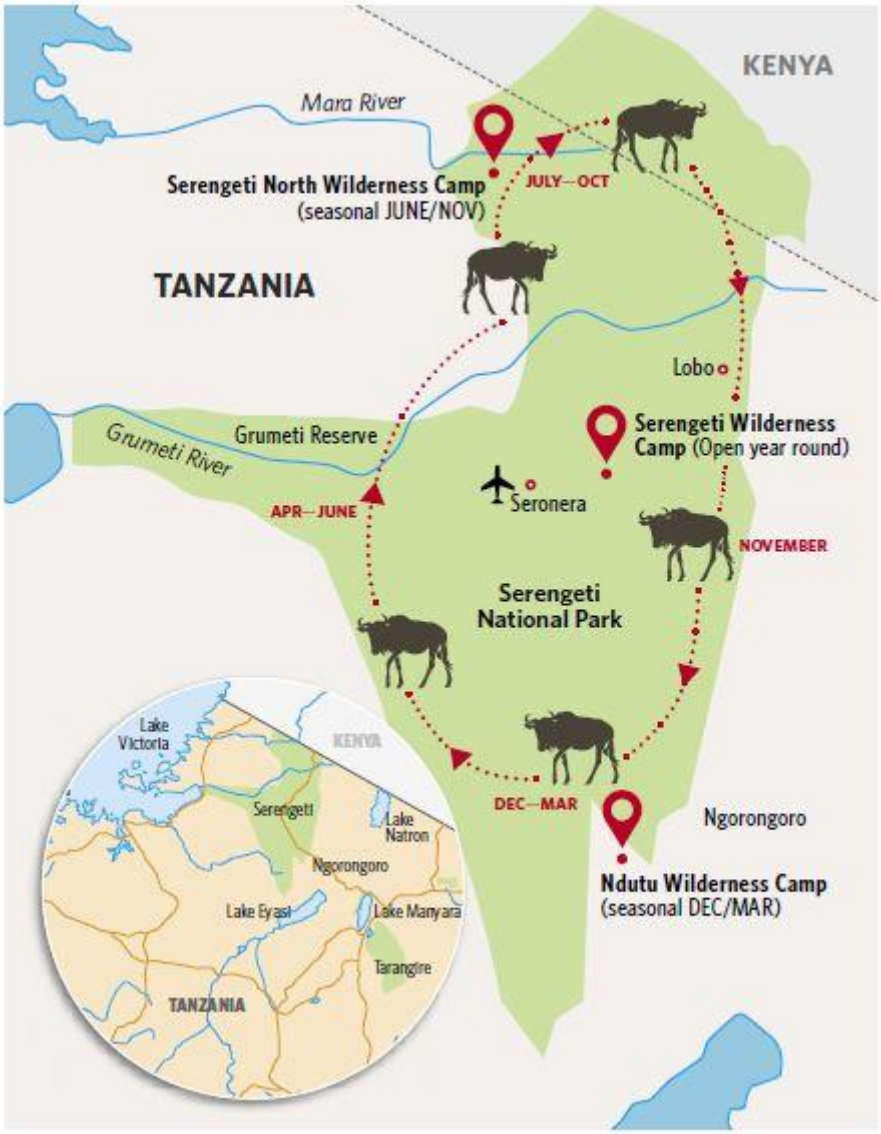
JAN / FEB / MARCH
The large herds of wildebeest are generally in the southern plains of the Serengeti eco-system. Calving takes place over approximately two weeks, with an estimated 8,000 babies born daily during this birthing season. This brings an abundance of predators and offers good visibility of game in a mix of open plains and some woodland.

APRIL / MAY
The herds start moving toward central Serengeti. This is typically the green season, where game viewing is still excellent and there are some great low season discounts on offer. It generally doesn't rain all day, and conditions for photography are often superb with moody skies and good depth of colour. It's one of our favourite times in the Serengeti.

JUNE / JULY / AUGUST
The wildebeest continue their trek from the central area and split to the west and north. Dramatic river crossings ensue as tens of thousands of wildebeest hurl themselves across the Grumeti (western corridor) and Mara Rivers (northern Serengeti) in the greatest wildlife show on earth.

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER
Whilst some of the wildebeest successfully reach the Masai Mara, there are still hundreds of thousands remaining in the northern region of Serengeti, offering those with guests with loads of patience the chance to see exciting river crossings.

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
The massive herds start to return from the north to the southern plains, before the entire cycle repeats again!



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Wild Frontiers PTY (LTD.) - HEAD OFFICE - Johannesburg
Tel: +27 11 702 2035
Fax: +27 86 689 6159
Central Reservations: **reservations@wildfrontiers.com**

Members of : Atta / AUTO / TATO

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