

# Majete back to life

**A**s you descend the Rift Valley, the heat intensifies and your pulse rises as you see the astounding views that encompass the Lower Shire. Directly ahead, as you wind down the mountain side, are the spectacular views of the Majete Hills, rolling and magnificent in all their natural African glory.

About 45 minutes later you approach Majete Wildlife Reserve, a 70,000ha area that has been nurtured and protected for the last three years as part of the process to restore it as a flourishing conservation area.

Operating here is African Parks (Majete) Limited, a local company established by the African Parks Foundation for the management of Majete Wildlife Reserve. On March 28, 2003, African Parks Foundation signed an agreement with government, to take over the rehabilitation, management and development of Majete Wildlife Reserve for 25 years, without taking over government's ownership rights of the reserve.

When African Parks first arrived, Majete was



**Plenty game to watch at Majete.**

in a poor state of neglect following years of underfunded and under-resourced management and highly intensive poaching. Three years on, the initial work has been done, the foundation is firmly-rooted and the reserve is ready to welcome visitors back as part of its continual aim of becoming a vibrant, diverse, exemplary and self-sustaining conservation area.

The restocking of animals previously made locally extinct, is well underway and successfully ongoing. The reintroduction of several species of large mammals

includes the translocation of 70 elephants from Liwonde National Park in July 2006. Elephants are one of the most important species for both tourism and ecological impact.

Infrastructure has been greatly improved since African Parks' arrival, including 150km of new roads, the completion of 6 scout houses, administration facilities, a mechanical workshop and an operations room. Tawale-tented camp surrounds one of three artificial waterholes where visitors can watch water buffalo enjoying a drink while they tuck into

traditional Malawian food. It boasts four luxury tents complete with en-suite, lapa, kitchen, a 44KVA generator and staff accommodation.

Majete Wildlife Reserve is growing to become an area of increased importance both environmentally and sociologically as local communities realise the benefits available to them living near such a fantastic area for nature and natural resource management.—*Courtesy of African Parks (Majete) Limited*