

The East African Great Migration

Maasai Mara plains/Game Reserve in Kenya and Serengeti Plains/National Park in Tanzania

Zebra 200,000
Wildebeests over 1.2 million
Thompson's gazelles 232,000
Grants gazelles 125,000
Topis around 5,000

300,000 Wildebeest calves are born February/March. Wildebeest calves must learn to stand within 5 minutes and run after 15 minutes, in order to survive. You may see many lone calves, running around the plains looking for their mothers. Many get lost in stampedes, and no wildebeest will adopt another's calve.

January

The migration is in the south-eastern Serengeti on the short grass plains. January and December are the best months for zebra births.

February

Up until May the migration remains in the southern plains. In most cases, they will be evenly scattered on the plains around April with some still at the Ngorongoro Crater. This is the main month for wildebeest calving.

March

Start of the long/heavy rains within East Africa. They start to slowly head towards Serengeti, but mostly on the Ngorongoro plains.

April

Heavy rains this month. Wildebeest scattered on the southern plains of Serengeti.

May

The herds begin to move in columns as they begin their journey to the western area of the Serengeti.

June

Usually, the rains come to an end. The migration now starts to cross the Grumeti River in the western corridor, where many animals also perish. In a normal year the tail end of the migration will be in the Seronera/Moru Kopjes area.

July

The migration heads north-west, with part of the herds moving through the Lobo Area.

August

In a normal year and to be precise, the vast herds would now be entering the Maasai Mara even though the scouts check in as early as mid-July.

September

The migration will now be officially in the Maasai Mara.

October

The Serengeti is very dry this month, therefore the herds stay in the Maasai Mara until November. On a normal year Between September and October there will be numerous short crossings (in Mara River) from East to Western side of the Maasai Mara plains

November

After sensing the short rains in Serengeti the migration begins its trek back to the Serengeti plains.

December

The migration comfortably heads officially towards the southern plains of the Serengeti.

Please Note: That this is an approximate guideline based on a normal year calendar. The migration solely depends on the rains and should the short rains fail then the migration will not follow the normal schedule and might begin later. If the rains are plentiful, the migration might be a little be slow to leave the Serengeti.