



BIG CATS OF MALA MALA

**By Roger and Pat de la Harpe
Heather Dugmore**

The big cats of Africa are probably one of the continent's most valuable assets. Each year hundreds of thousands of visitors flock to Africa's game reserves to view lion, leopard and cheetah in their natural environment. Mala Mala, situated on the western fringe of the Kruger National Park, is arguably one of the best places in Africa in which to see these magnificent creatures.

Photographers Roger and Pat de la Harpe were based at Mala Mala home to five prides of lion, as well as many leopard and cheetah - for more than a year, capturing unique images of the big cats at close quarters.

In *Big Cats of Mala Mala*, Roger and Pat depict the playful nature of cubs at leisure and the often wanton behaviour of adults on the prowl in photographs so perfect in clarity and mood that even if you have never had the opportunity to visit the bush and view these cats up close, you will gain insight into their spirit and character, and be transported into the world of these majestic animals. Heather Dugmore's colourful and evocative narrative on the big cat's includes local African myths and legends, and personal anecdotes that cleverly complement the sometime very graphic sequence of photographs taken for this volume, at the same time offering background information and fascinating facts on the biology and behaviour of the big cats.

Intertwined is the tale of the evolution of Mala Mala, from a cattle ranch to hunting lodge into the modern era of conservation, vividly capturing the essence of the wild and its major players, the lion, leopard and cheetah.

This then, is the *Big Cats of Mala Mala*.

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