

MOMBO WILDLIFE & ECOLOGY

The Mombo Concession comprises 45 000 hectares (111 000 acres) and is located on Chief's Island – the largest land mass that lies slantwise in the central Okavango. In the interior, mopane woodland is interspersed with belts of Kalahari sand and acacia. Towards the edges of the island, regular seasonal flooding creates shallow floodplains dotted with wild date palm islands and riverine forest.

CAMPS

- Mombo
- Little Mombo



Mombo harbours prolific concentrations of general game such as giraffe, zebra, warthog, red lechwe, tsessebe, wildebeest, kudu, elephant, buffalo and impala. Abundant predator sightings include lion, spotted hyaena and leopard. Chief's Island is also home to the only white and black rhino found in the Okavango Delta.

The Mombo Concession is more familiar to those who dream of the Africa of wildlife documentaries with open grassland plains dotted with acacia trees and thickets. Ancient floodplains, long since dried up, form permanent savannah divided by swathes of dense mopane and acacia woodland. Raised, tree-covered islands ranging from a single termite mound to large landmasses are common. Trees such as real fan palms, sycamore figs, jackalberry and mangosteen characterise these island communities separated by open grassland and fragrant wild sage.

Both Little Mombo and Mombo Camp are situated on Mombo Island, an extension of the north-western end of Chief's Island which effectively splits the Okavango Delta into east and west. The whole of Mombo Island, and indeed Chief's Island, fall within the Moremi Game Reserve. This zone is also marked for low-intensity safari usage, making both Little Mombo and Mombo Camp incredibly exclusive and remote.

The sheer numbers and diversity of wildlife surrounding Mombo Camp all year round ensure that every guest has a breathtaking big game viewing experience: from herds of buffalo to the diminutive steenbok (a pretty dwarf antelope), to elephant, southern giraffe, impala, blue wildebeest and Burchell's zebra.



Many prides of lion and leopard are found here; and even smaller predators like serval and side-striped jackal are occasionally seen. Specialist carnivores like cheetah and wild dog are also regularly seen in this productive area.

This abundance and variety of wildlife owes much to the Mombo Concession's positioning on the ecotone between east and west Okavango Delta. To the east lies the ancient Kalahari sands and grassland vegetation, and to the west lies the more modern, water-borne sediments and vegetation of the Okavango fan. The annual cycle of flooding also allows large numbers of wildlife to utilise both habitats to the maximum.

Between March and May, when the waters arrive, large mammals are able to move into the Chief's Island area, which contains rich resources of grass and acacia woodland. The wetlands are fringed by large hardwood trees, containing shade, cover, nesting areas and food for a wide variety of mammals and birds. By September and October the waters have started to recede and leave behind vast floodplains of short, green grass when the islands are now at their driest. This is the secret to the amazing diversity and quantity of wildlife in the Mombo region.

Birdlife is prolific, owing the habitat diversity, with waterfowl like African jacana, African pygmy-goose, massive goliath heron and migrant waders in summer being particularly common.

It is no surprise that this richness and diversity of habitats, wildlife and birdlife is legendary amongst the tribal hunters of the 19th and 20th centuries. It was thanks to their efforts to protect this legacy that the Moremi Game Reserve was established.