

LENS

A telephoto lens that goes up from 75 to 300mm or larger is highly recommended. We will usually be able to get fairly close to the animals although the drivers will not get close or bother any animal they feel that they might stress such as one actively hunting or one with young. A zoom works well because it allows you to get a little wider shot and then “zoom” in for a closer shot without having to constantly change lens’s. A 2x converter (also called a doubler) is nice to have but not necessary. This will allow you to double the length of your lens (for instance from a 200 to a 400) by just quickly adding it on. However, it then will require more light and will be more sensitive to movement. Anything under 300 you can usually hand hold satisfactorily. There are after market brand lens’s such as Tamaron which you can get much cheaper than Canon or Nikon lens’s. I’ve used them in the past and they did a very good job. Note: I have been told that secondary market doublers will NOT work with the Nikon or Canon lens.

Some people bring little bean bags or table mount tripods to rest on top of the vehicle to steady the lens **NO FULL SIZE TRIPODS PERIOD**. We will ask you to take them back to your tent. Again, don’t make us be the bad guys. This is only fair to the others in the vehicle. Also note that an inexpensive lens hood will help with reflections from the roof of the car to combat glare from the sun.

Do not do as some books suggest of bringing empty bags then asking the camp to fill them with beans. The food is tightly controlled and inventoried and the chef will get into trouble if he does that.

FILTERS

James nor I personally bother with them, but a lot of people recommend a polarized one to help with reflected glare, or a daylight filter for a cool tint. However, a clear UVA/UVB one is *always* recommended to keep your actual lens from getting scratched.

RENTING EQUIPMENT

There are now great places where you can rent everything from lens to cameras and more. They are very reasonably priced, even for a long trip. We use borrow.lens.com and have been extremely happy with them. So if you just want to try out a different model or make of camera or lens, if you want a backup camera, or just want to bring a better set up with you to Africa this is a really good option.

OTHER CAMERA THINGS

Be sure to bring several batteries, - and don’t forget your chargers! Batteries are even harder to find in the bush than cards! Also bring puffer brush, lens paper and cleaner etc. as well as plastic bags to protect your camera from rain or dust - it WILL get dusty! **Extra lithium batteries are no longer allowed in checked luggage as of January 2008. Check TSA for further details.**

