



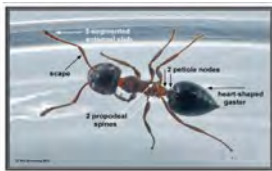
## CAMERA TRAP PROTECTION & SECURITY

Africa is harsh from both a weather & wildlife perspective. Camera traps are tough, weatherproof and are designed to be left outdoors in the but they are not immune to the elements. A certain degree of care, protection & security (depending on the setup location & duration) is advised to keep units operating at their optimum. Unfortunately too, theft and / or damage to ones camera trap assets, whether it be human or wildlife induced - is becoming more common. Thankfully we also have the required security accessories to greatly reduce this risk.

Below are the most common camera trap threats and protection / security setup examples which also highlight their strengths & weaknesses to assist you...

### **THREAT 1: Insects in your camera (Ants)**

The Brown Cocktail ant (*Crematogaster melanogaster*) are a common nuisance for camera traps. They are small and part of the ant subfamily Formicinae (formacine ants) and have the diagnostic characteristic of bending their 'tails'; raising their heart-shaped gasters above their heads when disturbed or in attack mode and release a fluid deterrent. This fluid is formic acid which plays havoc with camera electronics shorting them out and frying the camera.



#### **REMEDY 1: Mothballs**

*Break up a couple of mothballs & place them in the camera's battery compartment - this works as a good deterrent for ants and other insects.*



#### **REMEDY 2: Silicone**

*Use silicone sealant to cover up any visible holes in the camera casing that small insects can enter like external power ports / wire terminals etc. This will also have the added benefit of making your camera more water tight.*



### **THREAT 2: Condensation in camera (lens)**

It is the ultimate struggle between electronic devices and mother nature. Condensation is a fairly simple concept to understand. It basically occurs when the air temperature changes rapidly (typically in the early mornings) and the surface & air temperature inside your camera is cooler than the outside air.

Throughout the course of the night, temperatures tend to drop, cooling the surface temperature of your camera. The last few hours of morning darkness tend to be the coolest of the day. Once the sun begins to rise, the atmospheric temperature rises quickly, but the camera's surface temperature is unable to warm at the same rate, causing condensation to form.



#### **REMEDY 1: Outside casing condensation**

*Use a microfiber cloth to gently wipe / dry the camera lens. Now apply an anti fogging product by gently using a Q-tip to apply it. There are many products on the market, most notably brand names such as Holts Anti-Mist Spray & Astonish CAR Anti Fog Glass Clean work well.*



#### **REMEDY 2: Inside casing condensation**

*If you notice this then the first thing to do is to dry out all the moisture - especially take the batteries out of the unit and dry them. Batteries when wet, cause corrosion and this is likely the first trigger to long term damage to the camera. Place small silica gel packets inside the housing. Silica gel is found in everything from medication to electronic device packaging and can bring down the humidity in a contained space by up to 40%.*



### **THREAT 3: Corrosion of battery terminals**

Apart from moisture (condensation), battery leakage can cause severe corrosion damage to battery terminals. Alkaline batteries can leak - fact - regardless of brand.

**REMEDY 1: Take out batteries when not in use or use Lithium batteries instead**  
*If you are not planning to use your camera for a while take out the batteries.*



#### **REMEDY 2: Clean the damage**

*Clean any alkaline battery leakage damage with vinegar or lemon juice or Coke – these liquids work well to neutralise the discharge.*





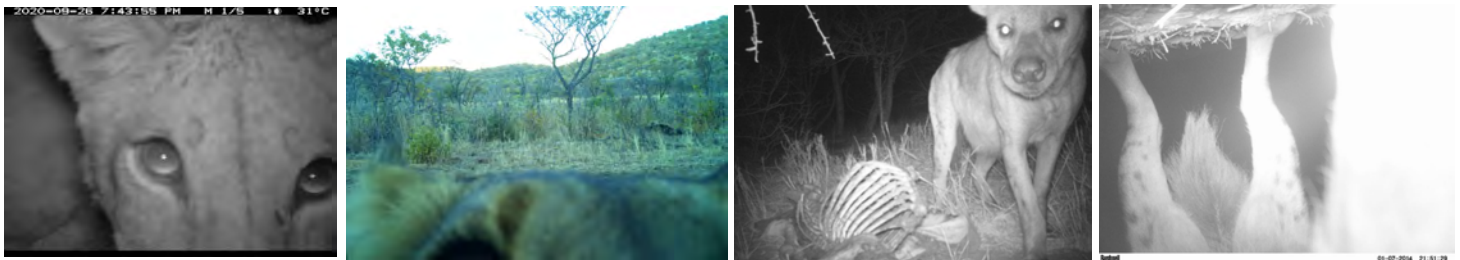
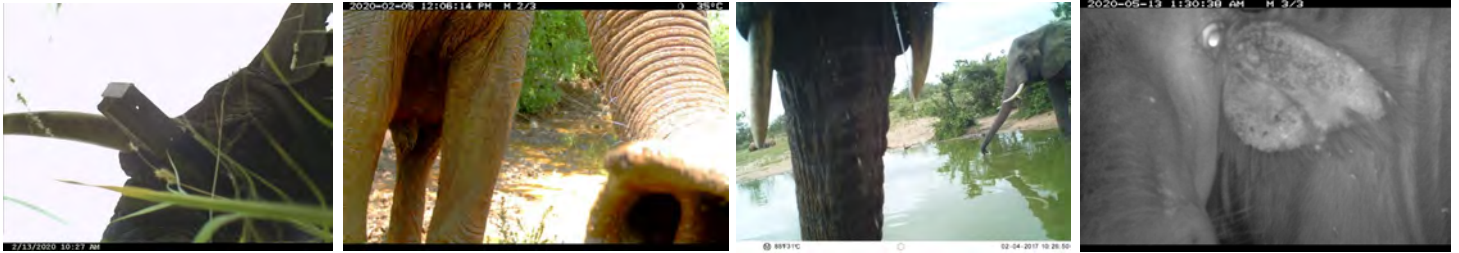
#### **THREAT 4: Wildlife & human damage / theft**

**Elephants and other big things** - You're unlikely to prevent a very determined, mature, bull elephant in Musth from pulling a camera trap off a tree - even when using all the security and protection accessories available. But they can also make him lose interest after long enough which prevents him from getting his way so he'll move off and leave it alone.

**Lions / hyenas and other things with sharp teeth** - Camera traps do not smell natural and as a result will bring attention to them followed by the occasional 'taste-test'.

**Baboons & monkeys** - These inquisitive creatures can test every buckle and loose part of a camera trap. One notorious part is antennas on cellular camera traps that are regularly twisted and broken off rendering the camera unable to transmit activations.

**Humans / trespassers** - Theft and damage to camera traps is also becoming all too common - especially if detected when used for security applications.



#### **REMEDY 1: Use metal security cases & MasterLock Python cables**

*These work very well in protecting your assets and are the first thing to consider when deploying your camera for security applications or in big game areas - where there is a risk of theft / damage (more info on next page).*

#### **REMEDY 2: Choose location & flash type carefully**

**WILDLIFE:** Large animals like waterholes with mud wallows and usually rub against the nearest big tree after a routine bathing to rid themselves of parasites. This is also often the best place for a camera trap hence the conflict... Rather choose a different location. Elephants in particular also don't like **strobe / white LED** flash camera traps (bright white flash for colour night time footage) - it makes them angry... Rather use black flash camera traps.

**SECURITY:** Rather mount the camera higher up above eye level and pointing down as this will make it less obvious. Also use black flash (no glow) cameras as when triggered at night they are undetectable.

#### **REMEDY 3: Use deterrents**

**WILDLIFE:** Rub vaseline on the antennas of cellular cameras or external power cables of camera traps. Baboons and monkeys hate the feeling of it on their hands and will soon leave it alone. Birds-eye chilli spray can also be effective against larger animals but does dissipate over time and after rain.



### Metal security case & MasterLock Python cable Setups

Depending on your setup location, additional security accessories may or may not be required. Below are scenarios of what is available and how effective (or ineffective) they really are.

#### EXAMPLE 1 [No Security]:

##### Supplied nylon mounting strap only.

- This offers very little protection / security as the strap can simply be undone or cut.



#### EXAMPLE 2 [Little Security]:

##### Supplied nylon mounting strap + MasterLock Python cable.

- Very little protection / security as the strap can simply be undone or cut and the holes that the MasterLock Python cable threads through on all camera traps **1** are plastic and can easily be snapped / broken.



#### EXAMPLE 3 [Some Security]:

##### Supplied nylon mounting strap + applicable Metal Security Case.

- This set up offers some protection / security but is more suited for a wildlife habitat where human presence is less likely. Our security cases are made from strong steel and are built to withstand animal bites / elephant & buffalo rubs etc.

Again though, this setup is only as strong as the nylon strap **2** or very determined elephant!



#### EXAMPLE 4 [Best Security]:

##### Supplied nylon mounting strap (optional) + applicable Metal Security Case + MasterLock Python cable.

- Although not 100% guaranteed, this set up offers the best available protection / security for any setup situation. The MasterLock Python Cable threads through holes in the lid of the Metal Security Case **3** making it virtually impossible to open the case once the cable has been threaded through and locked.



For more information, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

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