

Best known for its elephant herds and tree-climbing lions, Tarangire is home to all the classic African savannah species plus a few unusual ones – such as the long-necked gerenuk – that you won't see in the Serengeti. It's home to all the big predators and with 550 species of bird on the tick list, it's a fabulous destination for bird watchers.

Game viewing in Tarangire is largely affected by the presence of water, and during the dry season many animals congregate here in search of it. As the land dries and the smaller rivers stop flowing, the herds head south towards the permanent water in the Tarangire River and its surrounding swamps.



The arrival of the short rains in November and December triggers a dispersal of animals away from the river, especially grazers like wildebeest and zebra. January and February are generally dry but the rain returns in March and visitors should avoid the heavy rains of April and May when much of the park is inaccessible and most camps close.

More densely vegetated than the open grasslands of the Serengeti, Tarangire is mostly covered in open woodland with thick forest set along the river – ideal cover for leopards. It's also the best place in northern Tanzania to see the oddest-looking tree in Africa – the 'upside down tree' or baobab.

Travellers planning a safari to Tarangire will be pleased to hear that there's plenty of excellent accommodation available in the park – ranging from family-friendly camps to honeymoon hideaways – and the park combines easily with the Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater and Lake Manyara to make up the Northern Safari Circuit's quartet of safari destinations.