

## ANIMAL WAYS

## NOTES FROM TANGANYIKA

*Elephants.*—Some visitors returning from the Ngorongoro Crater stopped to watch a party of elephants descending on to the road from the bank above. First the only mature bull in the herd went down on his chest and felt for the road with his trunk. Having decided it wasn't too steep he slithered down and then proceeded to loosen the bank with his tusks and pull the earth down with his forefeet. Whilst he was doing this, the female members of the party pushed forward four small babies and the bull took them in his trunk one by one and put them on the road; then the remaining adults and half-grown ones followed via the excavations made on the bank and all crossed over the road and went on their way.

Four elephants were grazing in the open near Lerai. They were divided, one being on his own, 100 yards from the other three. A flock of about fifty egrets landed near the lone elephant and advanced towards him. This upset him a lot, he trumpeted at them, swinging his trunk and flapping his ears. He then made short dashes at the birds which flew off a few yards, but returned. They appeared to be deliberately tantalizing the elephant which very soon panicked and ran away to his pals, followed by the egrets. The birds then did the same to all four elephants which were likewise most put out and aggravated: there was a great deal of trumpeting and squeals galore, supported by short sorties and much trunk swinging. Still the egrets persisted to worry the elephants until finally, after five minutes or so, they packed in and trundled off, tails up and thoroughly upset. Once they reached the forest the egrets flew away to the far end of the lake, satisfied with their achievement!

*Lions.*—On the open ground in the middle of the Ngorongoro Crater six nearly full-grown lions and lionesses set about teasing a rhino. They surrounded the rhino and every now and then one would approach him from behind, jump in quickly and smack his rump. The rhino naturally resented this disrespectful behaviour and spun round, only to find nothing there. After the lions had teased him for some time the rhino refused to take any more notice and, when he showed no response to being smacked on his posterior, the lions gave up and left him alone.

One of the Seronera lions tore the mosquito net off a cook who was sleeping outside in a tented camp. The cook recovered

from this shock, but was again awakened by the lion pulling the groundsheet from underneath him. Sounds of rending groundsheet could be heard disappearing into the night. The cook retired to a lorry.

*Hyaena Tactics.*—Three hyaenas took part in an unsuccessful five-mile chase after a wildebeest calf. The tactics used were most interesting in that the hyaenas, like hunting dogs, took it in turns to chase after their quarry. When one hyaena grew exhausted he plunged into the nearest pool of water and another member of the chase took his place. After he had regained his wind and the chase drew near to him again, he rejoined in the pursuit.

NOTE : The above incidents are taken from the Report of the Trustees of the Tanganyika National Parks, July, 1958–June, 1959.