

Have you ever hunted with Wild Dogs....? I gave it a go at Kwando's Lagoon Camp in Botswana this year and what an experience, definitely not for the faint hearted! Kwando have armour plated their vehicles so they can follow the dogs over rough ground and areas thick with bushes.



The dogs move fast through the bush, so it's difficult keeping up with them and when they spread out, it's even more difficult. Only with the sharp eyes of our tracker and skilled driving of our guide were we able to follow them at all. The first commotion we came across the dogs had found a honey badger...



Now most animals know not to mess with a honey badger! He has very sharp teeth and is vicious, especially when he has a lovely boomslang (snake) in his jaws and a pack of wild dogs around him. The dogs were just teasing him though and he got into a right old frenzy dropping his snake and disappearing into the undergrowth.

The dogs headed off in search of something a bit more tasty, and after a short while there was yelping from the dogs and we followed at high speed trying to hang onto cameras, binoculars, water bottles and ourselves. I was in the very back of the 3-tiered vehicle and it was an interesting ride!

We ground to a halt to find one dog holding tightly onto the snout of a very large wart hog - and the other dogs trying to get hold of him but he was giving a hell of a battle trying to get away.

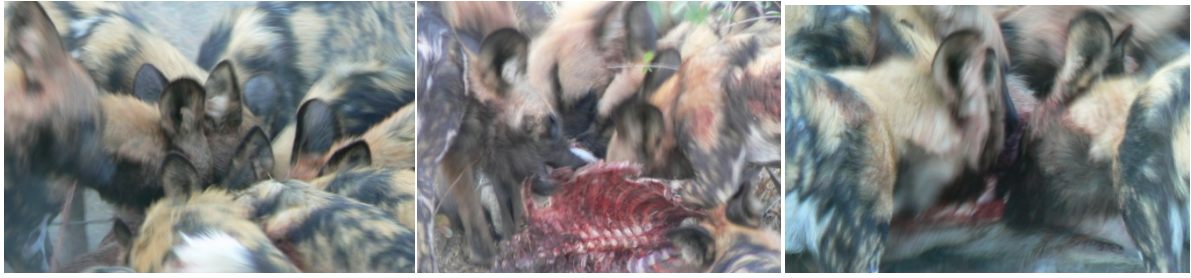


But to no avail as when a wild dog gets a hold he doesn't let go for anything.



The next half hour was certainly not for any warthog lover, or anyone too squeamish. The noise of the poor squealing pig was heart-wrenching (I can still hear it today). It was literally being eaten alive but the speed and efficiency of a pack of wild dogs was unbelievable and they had that hog stripped to the bone in an amazingly short time and everyone got their fill.





But it's a dangerous job hunting animals with big tusks. One of the dogs was losing a lot of blood from a wound to its back leg, but our guide was more worried about the puncture wound in its shoulder. But at least he had a full belly!



When the dogs were done and only the youngsters were squabbling over a piece of tough skin, it was nearly dark and we returned to the lodge at a more sedate pace. I was secretly hoping pork wasn't on our dinner menu!

