

# Ruaha River Update



## April 2016

The photo above, taken on April 1st 2016, shows how the river looks at the moment. It is really surprising to see how fast it has dropped since the huge flooding experienced in February this year. The level depicted here is the rivers new 'normal' for this time of year.

In the following pages you will see how high the river became, and how quickly it dropped again. These photos indicate that the Usangu Basin is still suffering from lack of inflow from its major rivers. With all the current rainfall, the Ruaha river should be much higher than usual, but it is not.

## Yearly comparisons



### **April 1st, 2016 Ibuguziwa**

It is really surprising to see that the river this year is almost the same as it was last year at this time. Considering the huge floods we had in February



### **April 25th 2015, Ibuguziwa**

The fact that the river level is so similar, probably means that there has been no improvement on the situation up stream.



### **March 7th 2016, Ibuguziwa**

The brown colour of the water indicates that comes from flooding rivers not from Usangu wetland. The water was high at about 3 meters below the bridge



### **March 18th 2015, Ibuguziwa**

The same time last year the water is black, indicating it is from the Usangu wetland. You can see how much higher the river level was this March due to flood waters from local sand rivers and run-off.

## Monthly comparisons 2015



**July 14 2015, Ibuguziwa**

The flow in July was more or less in keeping with the rivers recent 'normal' trend.



**August 20 2015, Ibuguziwa**

It was still flowing mid August, and it continued to flow until it became a trickle mid October.



**October 14 2015, Ibuguziwa**

The river slowly dried up at this spot towards the end of October, it had stopped flowing completely by the 30th.



**November 20 2015, Ibuguziwa**

By November the river had turned into stagnant pools, soon the pelicans and storks came in droves, to eat the dying fish

## March and April 2016



1.The photo above, shows the river on March 7th 2016.

2.The photo below, shows the river from the same spot (Ibuguziwa)  
3 weeks later, on April 1st 2016



The interesting thing is, that the level of the river in the first photo, was the 'normal' high, wet season level, for the river until the year 2000.

But now, we regard it as an usually high 'flooding level.

## Views of the river in Jan and Feb 2016



From mid January to Mid February, the Ruaha river had huge amounts of water flowing into it from the many small sand rivers.

Down stream from the Mwangusi confluence the Ruaha was enormous, unfortunately I do not have photos to show you.



This is the view of the river at the beginning of March, 2016 at my old camp. (near Jongomero) This level was actually the 'normal' level of the River when we first lived at this spot from 1994 till 1999. After the year 2000 the annual, high level, during the rainy season dropped annually.



I understand that the Mdonya river and Mwangusi were the highest anyone can remember seeing. These rivers were so huge that when they flowed into the Ruaha, it overflowed its banks, rendering the area around Lunda a huge flood plain.