



HERPETOLOGY

Associate Editor

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African Safari 2018



My trip to Tanzania and Kenya interfered with composing the Herpetology column. On the other hand, my albums include both stamps and photographs of the species depicted. I was able to add the four species on the cover, much improved pictures over those taken just six years ago.

- ① Mwanza Flat-headed Rock Agama, *Agama mwanzae* ♂ in breeding colors
- ② Mwanza Flat-headed Rock Agama, *Agama mwanzae* ♂ in non-breeding colors
- ③ African Rock Python, *Python sebae*
- ④ Flapneck Chameleon, *Chamaeleo dilepis*
- ⑤ Nile Crocodile, *Crocodylus niloticus*

First is the Mwanza Flat-headed Rock Agama (*Agama mwanzae*) male in breeding plumage. He and a few of his contemporaries displayed on an outcropping over 600 million years old. A couple of females took notice, and he went about his business. The more common *Agama agama* is featured on many stamps, but he is on Ghana Sc#2747b and Mozambique Sc#2972b. I wish I had those stamps! The second image shows an agama in normal colors.

We first noticed the African Rock Python (*Python sebae*) in a mating spiral with two females. After all that action was finished, he took off across the road. This male was easily eight feet long. My previous images of this species are all zoo or captive specimens.

The Flapneck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) was by the side of the road in Tanzania. As we drove by at full speed, the driver slammed on the brakes to avoid smashing it. While we were not allowed out of the van, I still got down on the ground to capture him walking the road and climbing the bank. Normally, an arboreal species, they are prized in the pet trade.

The Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) is featured on too many stamps to mention. This one was waiting for wildebeest to cross the Mara River. The crocodiles grab and then submerge the antelopes, stashing them for later consumption.