



The Victoria Falls In All Its Splendour As It Reaches Its Highest Levels In A Decade

The Victoria Falls appears to be thoroughly enjoying its alone time, reaching its highest flows in a decade in a powerful display of breath-taking beauty and intensity, which ironically no one is there to witness.

The Victoria Falls rainforest is closed, as like the rest of the world, Zimbabwe is in lockdown to protect against the coronavirus pandemic. However, when the time is right it will reopen and the Victoria Falls will still be magnificent.

Zambezi River Authority public relations and communications manager Elizabeth Karonga said the high water levels were due to a significant increase in both rainfall and run-off in the catchment area upstream of Victoria Falls during the current rainfall season.

Authority data shows four times more water is now flowing over the world's largest waterfall than at this time last year – on April 20, 3,922 cubic metres per second was recorded compared to 1,007 cubic metres per second on April 20, 2019.

“The Zambezi River normally experiences two peaks or floods, which are more evident in the upper catchment area, upstream from Victoria Falls, and depending on their magnitude, their effects are translated downstream,” Karonga said.

The first wave of floodwaters was recorded at Victoria Falls on March 31, 2020 with a peak flow of 4,289 cubic metres per second, and the second reached the Victoria Falls on April 14, and water levels were, again, rising, Karonga said.

The flow at the Victoria Falls from the second flood is expected to peak by end of April at more than 4,300 cubic metres per second, she added.

The flows at the Victoria Falls have not been this high since 2010, when they were slightly higher; they were also higher in 2009 and 1978, but the highest flows ever recorded were in 1958 when the peak flow reached an incredible 9,436 cubic metres per second, she said.

In coming weeks the rise in flows at the Victoria Falls will continue until the rainfall upstream subsides, leading to a reduction in the Zambezi River flows, and subsequently reduced flows at the Victoria Falls. The Falls are expected to peak at the end of May this year.

Ross Kennedy, chief executive of Zimbabwean hospitality group Africa Albida Tourism, said nature continued to show off her power and influence over our lives!

“At a time when the world is in trouble the Zambezi River and the Victoria Falls display immense beauty, rugged power and a glorious snub to the current negatives,” Kennedy said.

“It has been quite some time since anyone witnessed the majesty and intensity of this level of water flowing over the Victoria Falls, with the last period of such floods being ten years ago.

“What a sad and disappointing irony it is, that at this time that one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World is at its absolute finest, the world is in lockdown and very few if any will get to witness or experience this iconic destination in all its splendour,” he added.

“But, of course, nature being what it is, Victoria Falls will flood again and will be there to impress, enthrall and excite many millions of tourists in the decades ahead.”

Africa Albida Tourism operates a portfolio of properties in Victoria Falls, which include Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, as well as Victoria Falls Safari Club, Victoria Falls Safari Suites, Lokuthula Lodges and The Boma – Dinner & Drum Show.

IMAGE CAPTION: The Victoria Falls, April 2020

VIDEO CAPTION: Drone footage of the Victoria Falls taken on April 3, 2020

Media Release by Africa Albida Tourism

April 21, 2020

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