



Working with **WILDLIFE**

Kalahari Conservation Experience with



This project takes place on South Africa's largest private Big-5 game reserve.

This Wildlife Research Project gives guests the opportunity to enjoy living on a 240 000-acre Big-5 and **Malaria Free** private game reserve in South Africa's Kalahari Desert. The project offers a true perspective of the problems facing African Wildlife and allows guests to give something back to the continent's conservation efforts. Break free from tourists and time limits as you follow animals in their natural habitat in this once in a lifetime conservation experience!

What's included.

- ✓ **Meals** (*Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Special dietary requirements can be arranged; however, these requirements must be specified upon confirmation of your booking when your deposit is received.*)
- ✓ **Drinks** (*Coffee, Juice, Soft drinks, Tea, Water*)
- ✓ **Accommodation** (*The lodge is situated on the edge of a large calcrete pan which offers incredible game viewing and star-gazing opportunities. Two guests share each room, each with a single bed, there is electricity, hot water, and safe drinking.*)
- ✓ **Vehicles** (*SABS Approved Safari Game Viewing Vehicles*)
- ✓ **Activities** (*Game drives with educational sessions and more*)
- ✓ **Towels and Linen**
- ✓ **Laundry Facilities**
- ✓ **Field Guide** (*FGASA Qualified*)

What's excluded.

- X Alcoholic drinks** (*please feel free to bring your own in a cooler box*) *A fridge is available.*
- X Transport** to and from the Camp
- X Tips** and gratuities

*Please note that this schedule offers a rough indication of programme activities and is subject to change.



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Day 1 – Arriving at the Reserve

Arriving at the reserve around 13h00, time will be given for you to settle in and unpack. A light lunch will be served around 14h00. Afterwards you will receive a thorough introduction to the conservation project, discuss the upcoming activities, and get to understand how the project helps conservation and the ecological needs of the reserve. Around 16h00 there will be a short Game Drive with Sundowners at a waterhole.

Guests are accommodated in a tented lodge which offers incredible game viewing and sensational star-gazing opportunities to all who visit! There are four two-sleeper tents each with an en-suite bathroom (**rooms are shared between guests**). There is a kitchen and dining tent, a shaded outdoor section for guests to relax, and a boma for outdoor dining. There is electricity and hot water at the lodge, and safe drinking water is available.

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Schedule:

13h00 – Arrive at the reserve and unpack/settle-in

14h00 – Light lunch

15:00 - Introduction to reserve/Vision & Mission/Health & Safety, Indemnities

16:00 – Short Game-Drive with Sundowners at nearby waterhole before returning to camp for dinner and a bonfire.

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Day 2 – Predator Research

Based on the ecological needs of the reserve, you will be participating in the continuous research of various predatory species. This research will focus primarily on the development of a database with the reserve's African Wild Dog (Painted Wolf) and Lion populations. This database is essential for the reserve's ecologist to determine the reserve's predator/prey populations, and ensure a balanced ecosystem is maintained.

This research may involve other wildlife including (but not limited to); Cheetah, Leopard, Brown and Spotted Hyena, Elephant, Rhino, Vultures, and Buffalo.

***This may require following predators late at night when they are most active. (optional)**



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Schedule:

06:30 – Wakeup.

07:00 – Breakfast is served.

07:30 – Briefing/presentation and depart on morning activity.

13:00 – Packed lunch in the bush or back at camp

14:00 – Continue with activity.

16:00 – Enjoy a sunset drive/sundowner at watering hole

18:30 – Return to camp and freshen up.

19:00 – Dinner is served.

19:30 – Debriefing of the day's activities



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Day 3 – Camera Traps and Game Counts

We will place and monitor camera traps to conduct scientific research and animal identification (e.g. a wild dog's unique coat or a leopard's unique pattern). Due to the sheer size of the reserve, placing and collecting camera traps from around the reserve before analysing the data is no small task!

We will drive specific routes to conduct game counts and monitor any increase or decrease of significance in any of the reserve's wildlife populations. Accurate game counts are one of the most important tools for reserve management as changes in wildlife populations or sex ratios can be an early indication of specific ecological problems (e.g., too many/few predators). Management can isolate different variables and use these counts to correctly identify an ecological problem before it is too late.



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Schedule:

06:30 – Wake up.

07:00 – Breakfast is served.

07:30 – Briefing/presentation and depart on game counts.

13:00 – Packed lunch in the bush or back at camp

14:00 – Drive out and place camera traps.

16:00 – Enjoy a sunset drive/sundowner at watering hole.

18:30 – Return to camp and freshen up.

19:00 – Dinner is served.

19:30 – Debriefing of the day's activities



Day 4 – Vegetation Surveys and Reserve Work

The reserve's ecologist has set a programme in motion to monitor changes in fauna and flora. Over sixty randomly selected sites have been identified, and vegetation surveys are used to identify gradual and/or sudden changes in vegetation across the reserve, recognise changes in species composition, health of the grass layer, bush encroachment and whether the reserve is overstocked. This data is captured and analysed and used to determine the impact that environmental factors, including herbivores, are having on the vegetation of the reserve.

Bush encroachment is a problem throughout African savannas. Not only does it impact on the habitats available to animals, it also impacts the infrastructure that we need to use in conservation areas. As this is a large reserve that is not open to the general public, many of the roads are hardly used. In fact, you're unlikely to encounter another vehicle during your entire stay at the reserve! This

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also means that many of these roads get overgrown with encroaching bush and trimming of bushes on the road verges provides access to the road across the reserve. Other reserve work may include.

removing invasive plant species, and removal of old fencing wires from left over from earlier farming days that may entangle animals.



Schedule:

06:30 – Wake up

07:00 – Breakfast is served

07:30 – Briefing and depart on vegetation survey

13:00 – Packed lunch in the bush or back at camp

14:00 – Drive out for some reserve work

16:00 – Enjoy a sunset drive/sundowners at watering hole

18:30 – Return to camp and freshen up

19:00 – Dinner is served

19:30 – Debriefing of the day's activities

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Day 5 – Morning Drive and Departure

Wake up and watch the sun rise. It'll be your last opportunity to see some of the Kalahari's magnificent wildlife, before departing the reserve and heading back to the airport!



Schedule

06:30 – Wake up.

07:00 – Breakfast is served.

07:30 – Depart on a short game drive (optional)

09:00 – Return to camp and pack.

10:00 – Depart the reserve onto the next adventure.

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Education

- Learn from qualified and experienced personnel about the reserve's ecology, biology and interesting animal behaviours, as well as the importance of habitat restoration and nature conservation for future generations.
- Learn about the ongoing rhino poaching crisis from experts in the anti-poaching field, the methods that are currently employed to combat poaching, and the importance of saving the species
- Learn how to track animals with radio antenna and GPS as well as conventional methods like spoor, signs of movements, and even the birds that can indicate the presence of a specific animal
- Understand the role that certain species has on the ecosystem and the impact that population decline/growth has on the environment.
- Learn about the various plants, amphibians, reptiles and bird species that occur in the reserve.
- Discover the importance of genetic diversity in sustaining healthy wildlife populations.
- Learn about the hunting behaviour of predators and understand how this differs between the various species.
- Understand the significance of alien invasive species and the effects these plants have on the ecosystem
- Understand the importance of eco-tourism and the role it can play in conservation
- Learn about the challenges these animals face when sharing the Kalahari's limited resources and so much more!

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Under no circumstances will an animal be darted for guest purposes. This project falls in-line with the ecological needs of the reserve only!



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Nocturnal Species

The reserve is home to some incredible nocturnal species such as Aardvark, Aardwolf, Bat-Eared and Cape Foxes, Brown and Spotted Hyenas, Caracals, Genets, Honey Badgers, Leopard, and Porcupines. Current nocturnal monitoring focuses on lions and camera traps, but it is our goal to include additional species in our monitoring project soon. It is also our goal to begin researching the reserve's Pangolin population due to the current global pangolin poaching crisis.



Birds

The reserve is home to 179 different bird species including some of the country's most endangered species. Additionally, the reserve is home to a fascinating vulture breeding project where participants will be able to join in the annual tagging and measuring of chicks of the critically endangered species if this should take place during their stay.



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Photographic Opportunities

Even though we are not selling a photographic safari, our conservation experience offers some incredible photographic opportunities, and we encourage all guests to bring with a camera:

- There are no other vehicles to share sighting with
- We have no time restrictions at sightings
- There are no neighbouring communities and therefore no light pollution (stargazing)
- Given the nature of our project, we can use the GPS collars to track Wild Dogs and Lions
- Driving off-road to follow predators is significantly easier than the lowveld given the Kalahari bushveld

Notes

- **Location - Due to the ongoing rhino poaching crisis, we do not disclose the name and/or precise location of the reserve. The nearest town is Tosca (North-West). Once you have made a reservation you will receive a pin which is an entry gate to the Reserve where you will be met and guided to the Camp.**
- **We have exclusive rights to the reserve.**
- **The order of the daily scheduled wildlife activities may change around subject to unexpected and/or special ecological events.**
- **Travel & Medical Insurance is mandatory for all guests.**
- **Participants must be 18 years or older or accompanied by a legal guardian if younger. Children are not allowed.**
- **Guests need to sign an indemnity forms upon arriving at the reserve.**

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