



# Aberystwyth University Wildlife & Veterinary Course – Project Information Pack



## KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife & Veterinary Project

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# TRIP OVERVIEW

AFRICA

## Aberystwyth University KZN wildlife – Booking Reference 4674

### Trip Dates:

31<sup>st</sup> August 25 – 14<sup>th</sup> Sept 25

### International Flights:

Flight No	Flight Date	Dept.	Dept. Time	Arr.	Arr. Time
VS449	31/08/2025	London Heathrow (LHR)	22:00	Johannesburg (JNB)	10:00
VS450	13/09/2025	Johannesburg (JNB)	18:55	London Heathrow (LHR)	05:00

### Project:

KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife & Veterinary – Nambiti Game Reserve & Zingela Wilderness Reserve

### Trip Cost:

£2469.00 per person (to be confirmed once flights are available)

- £300.00 Deposit
- £1084.50 – 50% Instalment due 12/05/2025
- £1084.50 – Balance due 07/07/2025





**AFRICA**

# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Overview and location  
of the project





## KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife & Veterinary Project

Our academic team and qualified rangers at the KwaZulu-Natal Conservation Research Project offer a bespoke course tailored to each institution's personal objectives and learning needs. We structure the trip as a 12-day academic module, split between two conservation reserves.

As part of the experience, we bring in wildlife veterinarians who spend time with the group, sharing their expertise and offering hands-on learning opportunities. Additionally, we involve the group in local community projects, where they assist in caring for livestock and domestic animals, providing a broader understanding of the local ecosystem and community needs.

A full day will be planned but will vary from day to day depending on the days task and research goals.

**The project split and duration are as follows:**

### 12 Day Itinerary

#### Days 1 – 6

Nambiti Big 5 Conservation Research

#### Days 6 – 12

Zingela Wilderness Conservation and Adventure Activities

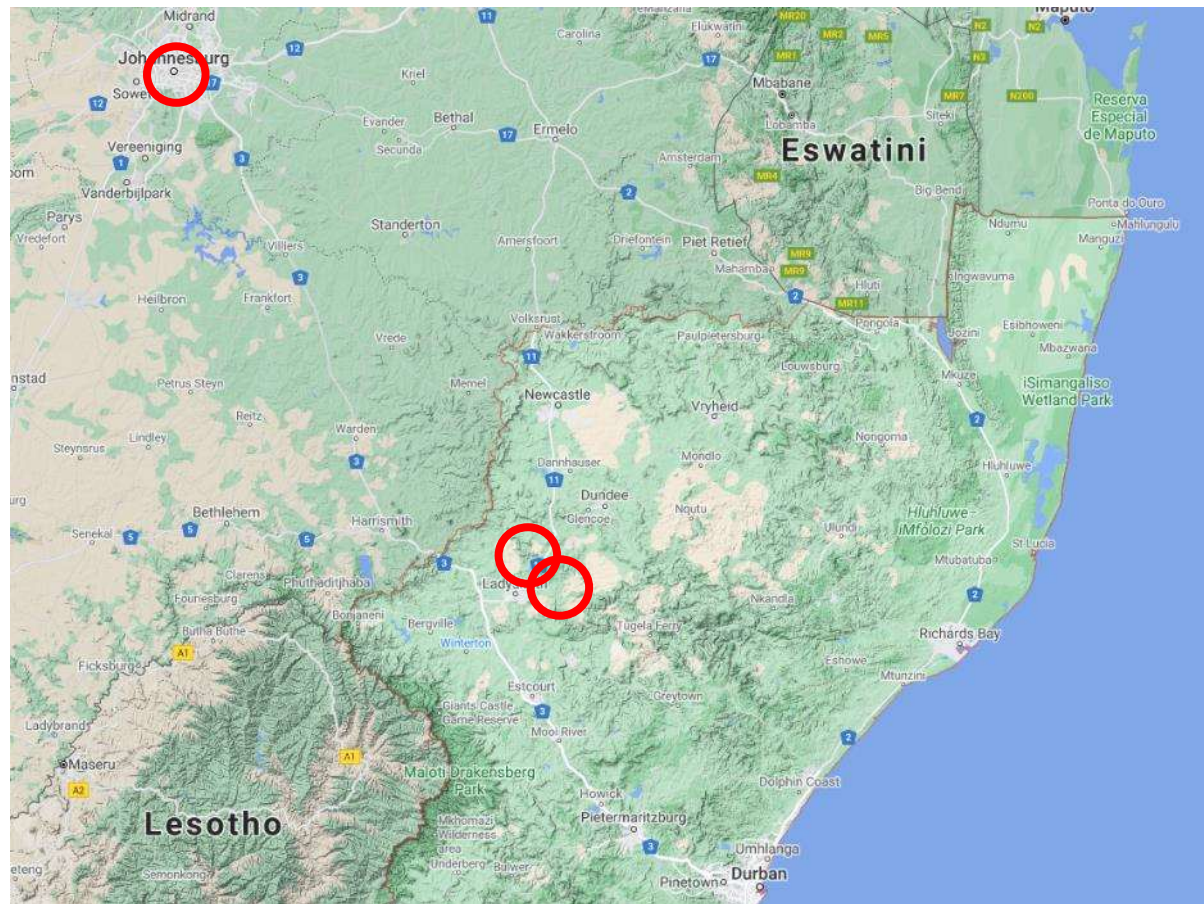


# ABOUT THE PROJECT

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## KwaZulu-Natal Conservation Project- Location

South Africa a world leader in conservation







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# 6 Days at Nambiti Game Reserve

A Big Five Game Reserve





## Nambiti Game Reserve (Days 1 – 6)

Nambiti Game Reserve, located in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, is a 22,000-acre private reserve ideal for academic groups focusing on conservation, wildlife management, and ecological research. The reserve offers a range of habitats, including savannah, rivers, and thornveld, supporting a rich biodiversity, including the **Big Five** and over 40 other mammal species. Nambiti's malaria-free environment provides year-round access for researchers studying animal behavior, habitat restoration, and conservation practices. Additionally, the reserve's focus on sustainable eco-tourism offers valuable insights into balancing conservation efforts with tourism management.



# YOUR PROJECT

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## Your Conservation Programme – Nambiti

Students will be taught and work alongside the field guides and conservation team. The following examples depict the day-to-day activities that may be undertaken as part of the project at Nambiti.

- Alien vegetation control & reserve maintenance
- Use of telemetry tracking
- Elephant monitoring / Population study
- Rhino monitoring – awareness
- Anti-poaching talk and fence walk
- Camera trapping
- Night drive
- Big Five bush walk
- Habitat and prey selection of predators
- Tracks, signs and spoor
- Community development
- Wildlife intervention (not guaranteed)





## Additional Research Projects

**Aardwolf Research** – A new project for 2024/25 monitoring the aardwolf on Nambiti. Aardwolves are a nocturnal, insectivorous species of hyena. Through night drives, camera traps and collaring we hope to gain a better understanding of the species and their behaviour. Termite mounds have also been logged as well as possible den sites along fence lines

**Birds of prey research** – Identification of a key species on the reserve. Epicollect forms have been made, these forms contain nest sites, locations, GPS coordinates, species, number, road name.

**Animal Vigilance in Antelope: Response to Predation Risk** – Focusing on vigilance behaviour in antelope, specifically impala and blue wildebeest, as a predator avoidance strategy. This study is particularly timely with the planned introduction of cheetah and African wild dogs onto the reserve, providing a unique opportunity to observe changes in antelope vigilance in response to increased predation threats



## Research Projects

**Small Predator Management** - All species need to be identified, mainly via camera trapping. A catalogue of animals is being made so we can identify as many individuals as possible on the reserve. More information is desperately required by the reserve, especially in relation to prey species.

**Large Predator Management** - Lion, leopard, spotted hyaena, brown hyaena and caracal have an impact that needs to be identified and recorded. Mapping their home ranges and activities.

**Conservation Management** - Aspects of the physical management of the environment and other supporting infrastructure needed to manage a game reserve. Fencing, road and tracks, erosion, planning and mapping.

**Mega Herbivore Management** - Feeding habits and their impact on the ecosystem need to be reported on.





## Veterinary Interactions

As part of the program, students will have the unique opportunity to interact with a local wildlife veterinarian who plays an integral role in the overall management of the game reserve. Through this interaction, students will learn about the complexities and responsibilities involved in managing the health and well-being of wildlife populations. The vet will guide students through the various medical, ethical, and conservation considerations that must be addressed in the field, providing them with a first-hand understanding of how veterinary science contributes to the broader conservation goals of the reserve.

The highlight of this experience will be the potential for a planned wildlife intervention, where students can observe and, where appropriate, assist in the treatment or management of an animal. However, it is important to note that such interventions are subject to specific conditions, with the welfare of the animal being the top priority. While the opportunity is anticipated, it is not guaranteed, as it depends on the prevailing circumstances and whether an intervention is in the animal's best interest at the time.





# YOUR PROJECT

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## Community Projects & Zulu Culture

A chance for academic groups to meet the locals living around the game reserves

The opportunity to meet chiefs and experience traditional Zulu culture first hand

Projects: Move Africa, Jabong Hats, Project Rhino and Rhino Art







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# 6 Days at Zingela Nature Reserve

River Research and Adventure





## Zingela River Safari (Days 6 – 12)

Zingela River Safaris, situated along the Tugela River in KwaZulu-Natal, provides an excellent field site for academic groups conducting research on river ecosystems, biodiversity, and conservation. The area's varied topography, including riparian zones, bushveld, and rocky outcrops, offers diverse opportunities for studying riverine flora and fauna, as well as the impact of environmental factors on local ecosystems. Researchers can focus on topics such as habitat preservation, species adaptation in semi-arid conditions, and the role of river systems in supporting biodiversity in the region. The reserve is a prime location for ecological and conservation field studies, free from the pressures of tourism-focused activities.





## Your Conservation Programme – Zingela

Students will be taught and work alongside the field guides and scientific team. The following examples depict the day-to-day activities that may be undertaken as part of the project at Zingela Reserve.

- Spatial distribution and habitat use of species
- Use of telemetry tracking
- Giraffe migration and conservation project
- Reptile pit fall traps
- Freshwater ecology
- Mini SASS
- Fish tagging
- Bird ringing
- Educational bush walks – ecology & botany
- Tracks, signs and spoor
- Community development
- Camera trapping and data processing

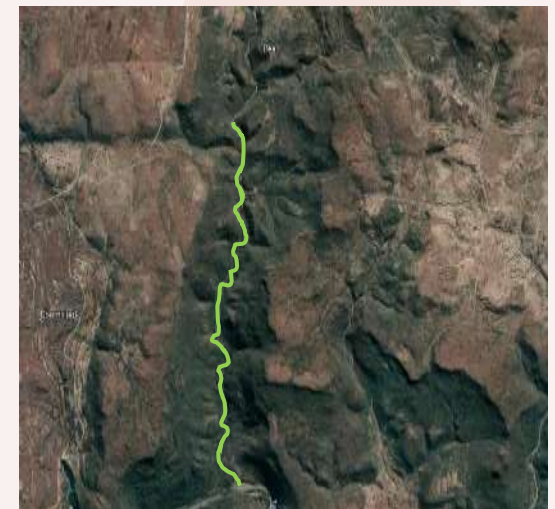


## Hike to Zingela

Participants will depart from Nambiti, meeting our guides for a 6.5km hike through community lands to Zingela. Along the way, local guides will discuss the cultural significance of goats and cattle in Zulu society, as well as notable trees and plants encountered en route.

The hike follows a streambed, passing two waterfalls, with a 300m descent into the Tugela River Valley. Upon reaching the river, participants will don life jackets and cross in inflatable rafts. Upon arrival at Zingela Camp, lunch will be served, followed by a camp orientation and some time to settle in before the next activity.

\* A road transfer will also be available between reserves for anyone who doesn't wish to participate in the trail.





## Research Projects

**Giraffe Research Project** - In the past five years, considerable progress has been made in compiling and producing a species-wide assessment of population size and distribution. The continued growth of these populations however is limited by the ability of that ecosystem to support a particular number of Giraffes due to space, water and forage availability (i.e. limited carrying capacity).

Over population of giraffe can have deleterious effects on indigenous flora which may in turn adversely affect other animals within the conservation area; it is necessary to calculate a sustainable carrying capacity for a specific area.

Through our ongoing 'Giraffe Conservation Project', we aim to gather all the data necessary for generating a conservation plan for our giraffe. This will help in planning for the future expansion of conservation areas or for reducing the population size through game capture.



## Research Projects

**Freshwater ecology** - Led by Dr. Scotty Kyle, this session begins with a demonstration of fish tagging and an in-depth discussion on managing one of the country's largest fisheries. Following the talk, participants will engage in a practical exercise known as miniSASS, or kick sampling, to assess river health by examining aquatic invertebrates. Using nets, participants will collect specimens to calculate the river's health, with data uploaded to a citizen science platform. Additionally, participants will learn about the use of fish telemetry through the FISHRAC program as part of ongoing biomonitoring efforts.

**Camera trapping** - Participants will assist in managing 10 camera traps set up to monitor the reserve's nocturnal wildlife and estimate the relative abundance of various mammal species. Accompanied by trained guides, the group will collect and analyze the trap data, relocate the cameras, and gain insights into the reserve's fauna.





## Research Projects

**Bird ringing** – This long-standing bird conservation activity involves capturing birds in mist nets and attaching rings for identification and monitoring. Participants will assist in recording data such as weight, measurements, and species identification. With over four years of data, re-capturing previously ringed birds is not uncommon.

**Pitfall traps and rock flipping** – Participants will assist with setting up, maintaining, and monitoring pitfall and funnel trap arrays used to assess the biodiversity of reptiles and amphibians. Additionally, they will learn rock-flipping techniques to discover and identify insects and reptiles living beneath the surface.

**Alien plant removal** – Zingela is actively involved in the removal of invasive prickly pear cacti, which are outcompeting native vegetation. Participants will use scythes to clear these invasive plants, with the removed material composted for the camp's organic food garden. This activity supports grassland rehabilitation and carbon sequestration efforts.



## Bush Walks and Ecology Trails

One of the unique aspects of the KwaZulu-Natal Conservation project is the ability to utilise the reserves for walking trails and ecology lessons.

Groups will be accompanied by professional guides as they navigate through the reserve observing the smaller aspects of the flora and fauna that the African Bush has to offer.

Along the way the guide will identify edible and poisonous plants, as well as those of cultural significance, enhancing the educational value of the hike.





## Activities and Adventure– Kayaking

A recreational activity offering a break from the academic schedule, participants will kayak 3km down the Tugela River, navigating beginner-friendly Grade 1 & 2 rapids. This relaxing excursion also provides excellent birdwatching opportunities from the water.





## Activities and Adventure– Abseiling

The 35m abseil at Zingela offers stunning views and an exhilarating descent led by accredited expert guides. This activity provides a unique opportunity to experience the natural beauty of the Tugela River Valley from a new perspective.





## Potjie Cooking Competition

A traditional South African experience, the Potjie competition involves cooking a stew in three-legged pots over an open fire. Teams of 6-8 participants will compete, starting with the challenge of lighting the fire. This activity promotes teamwork and serves as a fun icebreaker in a relaxed, festive environment. The winning dish, judged by our expert cooks, will be served for dinner, allowing everyone to enjoy the fruits of their labor.





## Animal Welfare Outreach Program

Participants will join the camp's in-house veterinarian to assist local Zulu farmers in caring for their livestock, primarily goats, but also including dogs, cats, sheep, and cattle, depending on the participants' qualifications and experience. This program has been well received and there are several opportunities for involvement, including:





## Animal Welfare Outreach Program

### Vaccinating and caring for local farmers' goats

This activity is suitable for all animal management students. Participants will assist in catching goats for health inspections and administering necessary treatments. Even those with minimal experience can contribute—on a previous trip, two students managed to catch 11 goats each on their first outing.

### Working with various animals at the homestead

Ideal for vet nurses, particularly those who have been vaccinated against rabies and tetanus. This aspect involves treating domestic animals such as dogs, cats, and chickens at local homesteads.

### Animal welfare education at local schools

This educational initiative is aimed at children, who are often responsible for the care of young animals. By providing education on proper animal care, participants can make a lasting impact on the community. This activity is suitable for all animal management students.

In addition to these specific activities, the group will also visit local schools to further engage with students and promote responsible animal care, focusing on livestock as well as domestic pets.





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# **ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE**

Life in the African Bush



## Game Reserve Camps - Nambiti

In keeping with the safari adventure theme, groups are accommodated on the reserve in shared comfortable safari tents, with communal hot and cold showers and regular flushing toilets.

All meals are provided in a communal dining area. Students are expected to help clear up after meals.

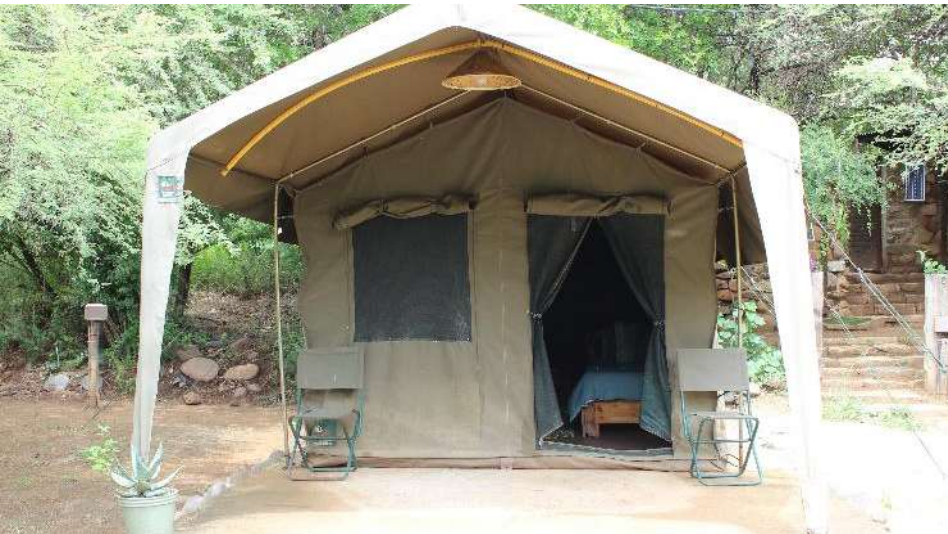




# ACCOMMODATION

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## Game Reserve Camps - Zingela



ANY QUESTIONS?

[INFO@GAPAFRICAPROJECTS.COM](mailto:INFO@GAPAFRICAPROJECTS.COM) | +44 (0)207 1937819

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# **USEFUL INFORMATION**

Inclusions/Exclusions &  
Recommended Kit List



# WHAT'S INCLUDED

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## What is included?

- Flights
- Transfers to/from project
- Accommodation
- Three meals per day
- All activities as part of the project
- ATOL protection
- Airport meet/greet
- 24/7 In country support

## NOT Included

- Personal Travel Insurance \*
- Meals on travel days – before arriving & after departing from the project.
- Any activities not specified as part of the project
- Visa's/travel documents
- Tips

\* We recommend that you take out personal travel insurance as soon as your booking is confirmed.





## Suggested kit list

- Short sleeve shirts
  - Long work trousers and shorts  
(Or work trousers with zip-off longos)
  - T shirts
  - Hiking Boots/comfortable walking shoes to work in every day
  - Rain jacket
  - Sweatshirt/Fleece (Winter months pack plenty)
  - Padded parka jacket/windbreaker –(it can get very cold on an open vehicle – even on a summer evening)
  - Daypack rucksack
  - Microfibre sleeping bag liner – useful for extra warmth in winter
  - Socks
  - Hat for sun protection / Warm Hat (winter only)
  - Working gloves
  - Gloves for warmth (winter only)
  - Changes of casual clothes for evenings
  - Underwear
  - Sandals / comfy shoes to wear after work hours
  - Beach towel
  - Swimming costume
  - Toiletries
  - Tick / insect repellent
  - Personal medical items and First Aid Kit
  - Binoculars
  - Sunscreen & Sunglasses
- Other useful items:**
- Good torch
  - Water bottle
  - Camera
  - Spare batteries
  - Mammal/bird book
  - Notebook/diary and pen
  - Lip balm
- All work clothes should be neutral or earth tones for working in the bush.
  - No skimpy or bright coloured clothing to be worn.





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