



Waterberg Welgevonden 'Zoo

Professional's' Project Presentation



Waterberg

Wildlife & Veterinary

Course

AFRICA

GLOBAL reach. **ADVENTURE** for all. **PROJECTS** to inspire.



AFRICA

ABOUT WELGEVONDEN GAME RESERVE

Project overview and
location

Your conservation field trip explained

- A unique conservation experience based in South Africa
- Live in a research camp on a wild African game reserve
- 12 day programme specifically tailored for zoo professionals
 - All inclusive experience
- Learn about conservation management
- Project activities include:
 - Pioneering conservation research
 - Conservation activities
 - Veterinary interventions and activities
- Dedicated vehicles and conservation staff

What is a game reserve?

- A large area of protected land with physical boundaries
- Wildlife is free roaming throughout the reserve allowing them to thrive in their natural habitat
- Reserves are either government owned (National Parks) or privately owned/managed
- Wildlife must be managed due to restraints on population growth, migration and resources
- Utilised as a tourist attraction (ecotourism) which creates funding for conservation efforts and research

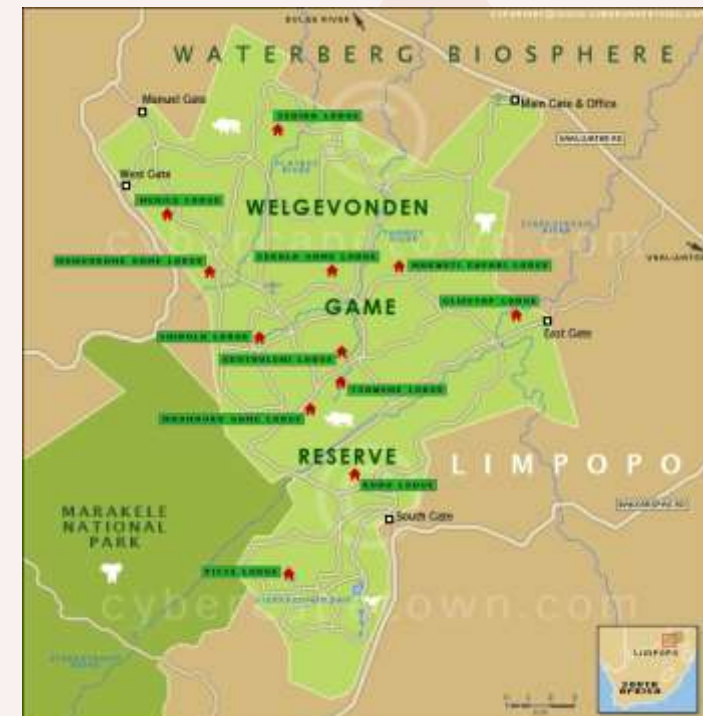


ABOUT WELGEVONDEN

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Welgevonden Game Reserve

- >36,000 Ha privately managed game reserve
- Forming part of the Waterberg Biosphere (4,000 km²)
- Proclaimed 'Protected Conservation Area'
- Savannah biome
- Work alongside the conservation team including:
 - Wildlife vets
 - Conservation researchers
 - Ecologists
 - Anti Poaching Unit (APU)
- Research Camp accommodation

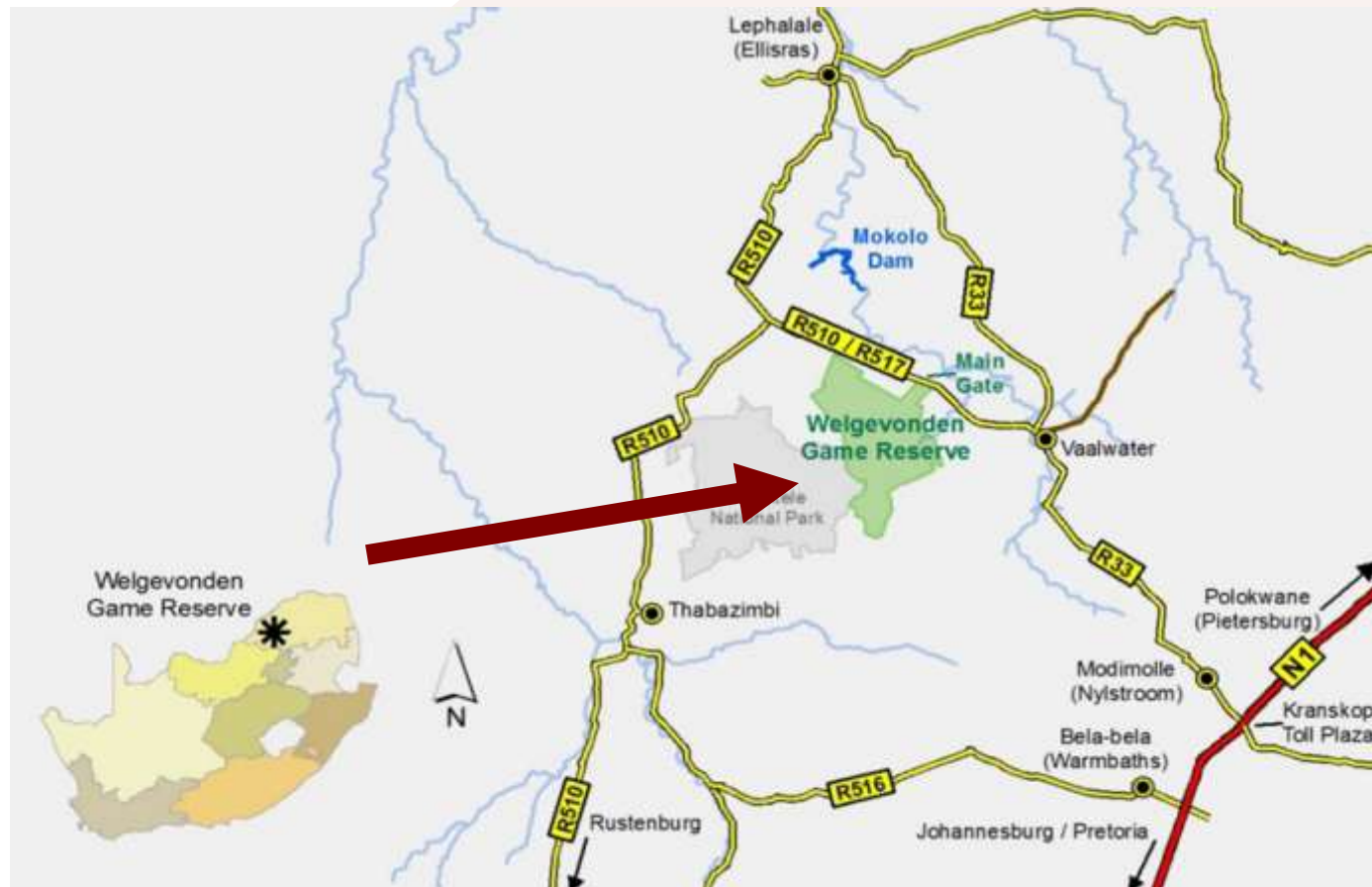


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Welgevonden Game Reserve – Location

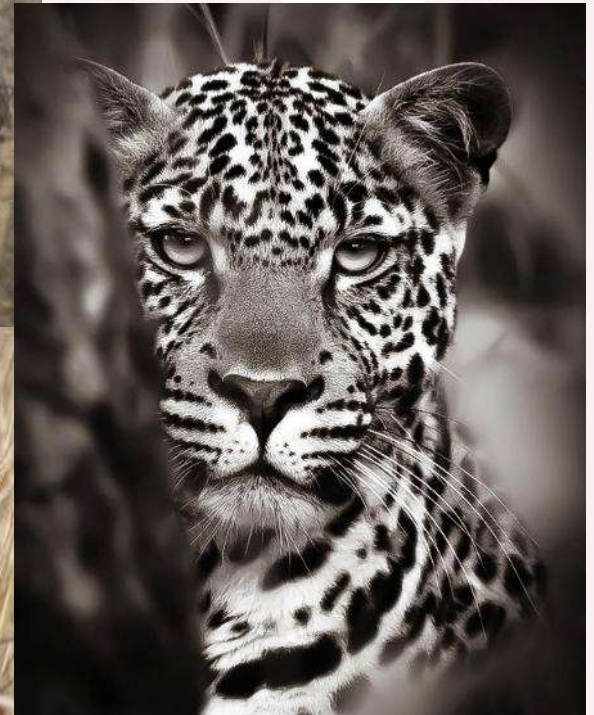
- South Africa a world leader in conservation
- Malaria free Waterberg Plateau



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Home to the BIG 5



[@belladuplessis](https://www.instagram.com/belladuplessis)

ANY QUESTIONS?

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ABOUT WELGEVONDEN

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Home to over 100 species of mammal



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our conservation work
in more detail

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Course fundamentals & structure

- Gain an understanding of wildlife research & management that govern wildlife & veterinary practices on reserve
- Observe a wildlife vets role & responsibilities
- Expose participants to behind the scenes wildlife conservation & veterinary work
- Learn about immobilisation & capture techniques used for various wildlife species
- APU activities & rhino protection through veterinary management
- Conservation research
- Appreciate the importance of herd health & intensive wildlife breeding
- Vegetation types suitable for wildlife & ecological assessments
- Birding, bush tracking & monitoring of the 'Big five'
- Learn about local conservation initiatives including the 'Waterberg Wild Dog Project'

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Course Study Manual

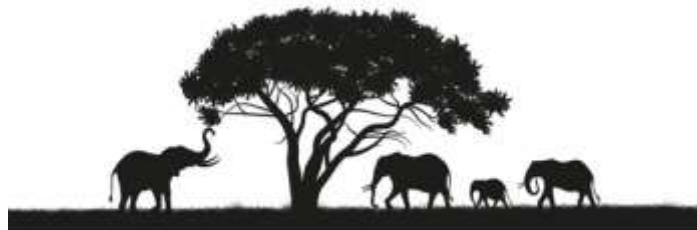


GAP AFRICA PROJECTS

CONSERVATION, WILDLIFE AND VETERINARY

Course Manual

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Research Papers: Cited



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History of Conservation in South Africa

Introduction

South Africa's national protection system includes 178 protected areas, of which 18 are national parks. Ecotourism has direct and indirect benefits to the economy in terms of job creation, rural development, and the emergence of secondary industries involving local communities and remains the fifth largest earner of foreign exchange. Approximately 5.1% of South Africa's land area is currently under statutory protection. Although land claims are permitted in these areas, the land must remain in perpetuity as a national protected area, and the state has the power to block residential development and veto commercial operations which they deem detrimental to the conservation area.

Current conservation management structure in South Africa is as follows:

- National – Department of Environmental Affairs
- South African National Parks
- Provincial Authorities
- Private Reserves
- Non – Governmental Organisations



Pre-Colonial Era

South Africa has a history of conservation; traditionally people lived in harmony with nature and the philosophies of sustainability and conservation were inherent in society. As hunters and gatherers, the indigenous people of this country depended on natural resources for their survival. Prior to European colonisation access to natural resources was controlled and influenced by religious and cultural beliefs. There were superstitions against killing certain species like hyaena, hamerkop or chamelion and people were prohibited from hunting or eating their totem animals (these included eland, zebra, monkeys, squirrels or crocodiles). Scarce or valuable products like ivory, pangolin meat or leopard pelts were used by chiefs and kings only. Chiefs and tribal councils were responsible for making and enforcing the rules for resource control. Chieftaincies were powerful institutions that were respected and obeyed by local people and their authority was absolute. The combination of different types of controls regulated the use of natural resources and protected the resource base.

Colonial Era

This period saw the natural resources of the country being exploited and in 1656 Jan van Riebeeck gave instructions to regulate hunting in the Cape. The Southern Cape forests were valuable to the British Navy and from 1811 measures were introduced to conserve the forests around Plettenberg Bay. By the 1830s rapid deforestation led to increased conservation awareness and by the mid-19th century there was an active and influential conservation community in the Cape and the first game reserves in Africa were declared in the Knysna and Tsitsikamma forests in 1885.



The creation of parks resulted in communities being forcibly relocated to new areas, or losing their land. Conservation became elitist and access to parks required social privileges with game reserves being fenced off and communities losing their rights and access to resources within the reserves. Wild animals would escape from the parks into community land and damage crops and livestock and this increased feelings of resentment by local communities towards conservation authorities.

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At the higher end of the spectrum you will find professional poachers.

They have well-structured operations and use high technology methods which involve -

- tranquilizer guns,
- helicopters,
- veterinary drugs, and
- high caliber weapons to kill rhinos.
- Many of the poachers seem to have had military training
- Often they have had prior access to information about the farm/reserve they intend to target.

Unfortunately due to the fact that highly controlled and regulated veterinary drugs are often used in cases of rhino poaching it indicates that there is some involvement of veterinary professionals.



When they land the helicopter, they hack off the horns with a chainsaw. The use of a helicopter allows for easy access and quick getaways. Several media reports have indicated that the registration numbers on the tail of the aircraft get covered up or falsified during the operation. The rhino subsequently dies either from an overdose of tranquilizers or bleeds to death.

One troubling fact is that the methods being used by the syndicates often reflect those used by wildlife capture operators in professional rhino management operations.

The rhinos are normally darted with a dosage of lethal drugs that may result in a quick death, although some evidence shows that the animal suffered great stress before death.

If the drug dosage had been too low to kill the rhino the animal is likely to wake during the brutal removal of the horns with a chainsaw.

The severely maimed rhino will then attempt to breathe through a cavity in its nasal passage between its eyes. This rhino will have no sense of smell and if it survives will have a great battle to fight off any secondary infection.

Wildlife industry insiders part of the problem?

Increasing evidence links South Africa's rhino poaching with wildlife industry insiders.

These individuals are obviously in a great position to run wildlife crime syndicates and are typically also well funded and connected within the industry.

There are also rumors that rhino poaching syndicates are penetrating the hunting industry.

The hunting industry obviously has access to guns, permits, vehicles and charter aircraft making them target for rhino poaching syndicates.

These rumors seem to have merit because of the increasing number of arrests of -

game ranchers,
safari operators and
professional hunters.

How to stop rhino poaching?

Unfortunately there is no simple and obvious solution to this problem.

There is currently numerous proposals in the pipeline and some heated debates around opinions which include the following:

Strong differences of opinion between people calling for legalized trade in rhino horn (to turn it into a commodity) and those against it.

Addressing the issue of educating the end user in Asia

To establish a database of all rhino horn DNA samples.

Etc.

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Course fundamentals and structure – Example itinerary

WEEK 1

Introduction to Welgevonden Game Reserve and research projects

Game count transects - daily

Vegetation surveys - weekly

Introduction to wildlife veterinary work in the context of 'African Wildlife & Further insight into wildlife veterinary work (*Dr Zoë Glyphis – Local wildlife vet*) – 1 Day

Time spent with research team conducting conservation activities – 4 Days

Week 2

White rhino feeding session in winter

Time spent with research team conducting conservation activities – 3 Days

Build up to possible intervention and planning

Specialist wildlife vet to conduct intervention with group –

(*Dr Peter Caldwell & his VN – Local wildlife vet (carnivore/predator specialist)*) – 1 Day



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Bush Skills – Bush walks & tracking wildlife



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Monitoring herd structure, herbivore body condition & health – daily transects



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Learn about a wildlife leaders (ecologist, wildlife managers....) role in the field



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Introduction to darting techniques

Learn the basic principles for darting wildlife

Each student will have the opportunity to use the gas-powered & .22 dart gun at the range



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Post mortems



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Introduction to wildlife veterinary medicine & pharmacology



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Game release and introductions



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Monitoring the Welgevonden white & black rhino populations

Individual monitoring – not APU / Guides like usual

Stronghold of white rhino (winter – suppl. fed)

Daily recording of individuals/group...:

- Behavioural observations
- Body condition
- Photo ID
- GPS locations



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Intervention possibility – Rhino: DNA collection, ID & ear notching



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Research – Elephant monitoring & cow contraception (PZP)



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Intervention possibility – Elephant immobilisation & collar change



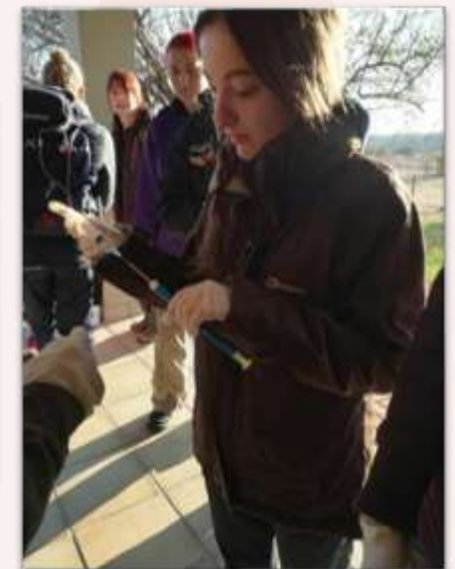
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Kill report

130 kills

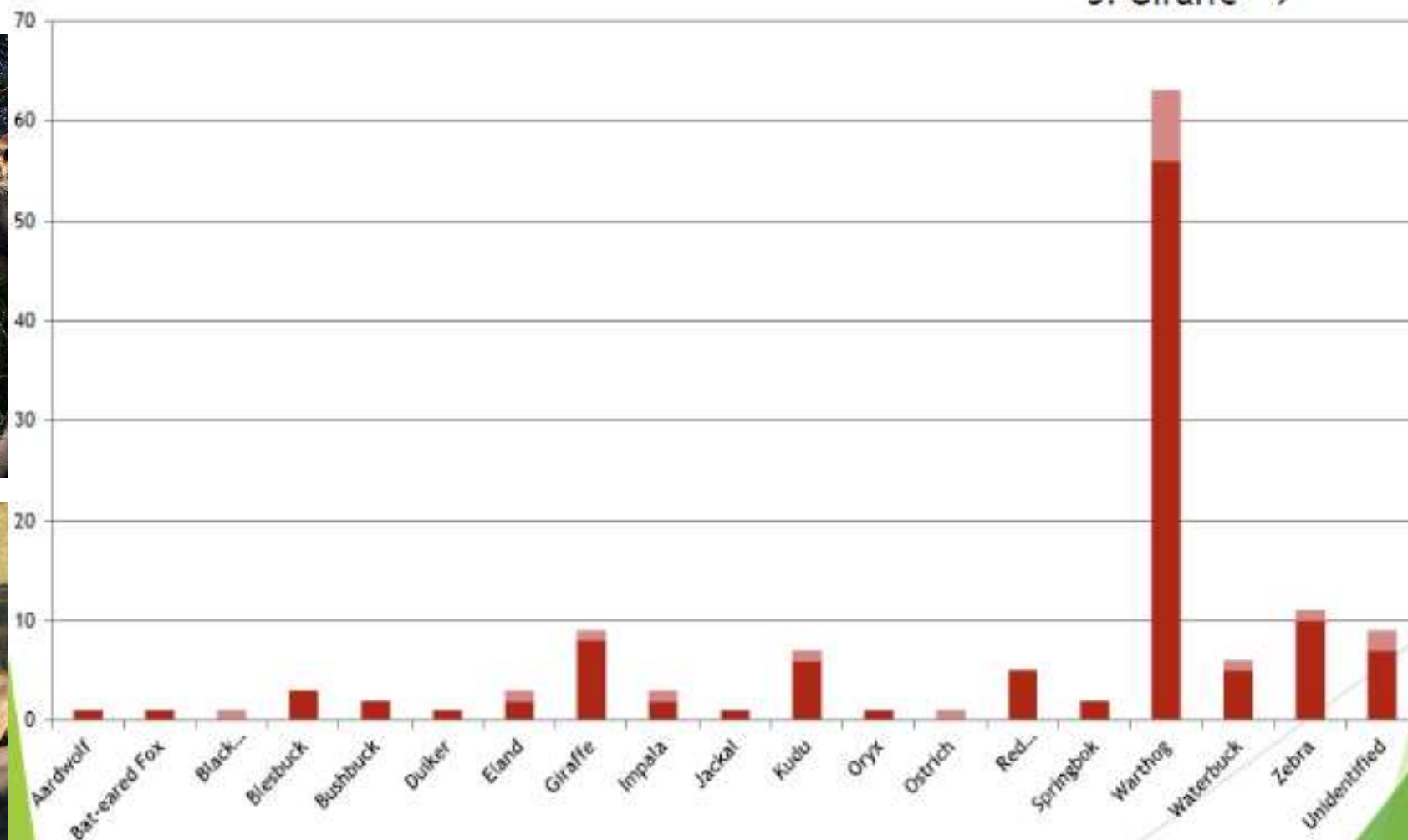
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1. Warthog - 63

2. Zebra - 11

3. Giraffe - 9

■ Southern Pride ■ Northern Pride



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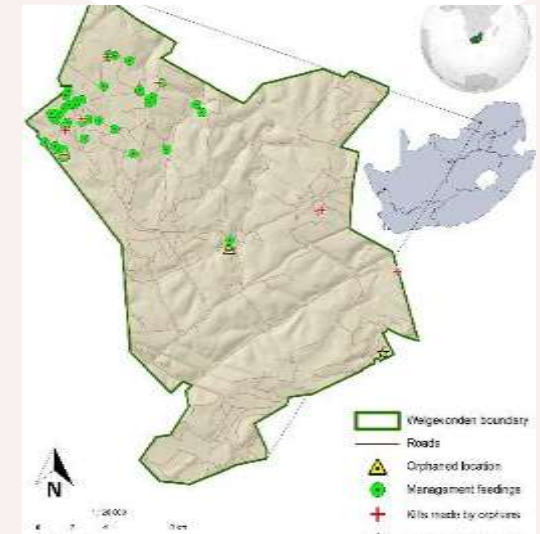


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**ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE TRUST**
Protecting forever, together.
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Population management – Cheetah ID



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Intervention possibility – Cheetah Relocation – Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT)



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Intervention possibility – Lion immobilisation, contraception & collaring / removal



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Intervention possibility – Collaring of spotted hyaena



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Intervention possibility – Free-roaming Waterberg wild dog – Boma visit



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Camera trap – Research studies



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Camera trap – Research studies



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Night game drives



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San rock art paintings & reserve history (TBC)



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Possible lectures & debates

- Drugs used in wildlife medicine
- Calculating doses in wildlife
- Darting wildlife
- Game capture systems
- Boma management & rehabilitation
- Logistics of wildlife transportation: customised vehicles, crates & equipment
- The 'Game Trade' – game auctions & value of livestock
- Managing game reserves and 'Land Capacity Model'
- Species control – predator pits
- State veterinary disease control in practice
- Documentation required: Red Cross Permits
- Notifiable disease sampling and control:
 - Tuberculosis
 - Foot & Mouth
 - Brucellosis
 - Corridor Disease



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ACCOMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Living in the African Bush

ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

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Welgevonden accommodation

- The student centre and camp is based on the reserve
- Tents that sleep 2-3 people per tent in single beds
- Lighting & electricity supply
- Communal hot & cold showers and regular flushing toilets
- Facilities including a lecture room, eating area, lounge, entertainment area & storage fridge
- Wi-Fi access on site
- The camp is fenced off inside the boundaries of the reserve – you can wake up & find an elephant 10 m from your door!



ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

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Welgevonden

All meals are consumed in the communal dining room/outside area

Three meals are provided to self-cook daily, prepared communally by the group. Students will take part in communal cooking and keeping the kitchen tidy.

Meals will either be served at the facility or as picnics (self-prepared AM) h- depends on activities either planned or unscheduled

The Biomonitoring Research team often work 6 days a week so time off is often limited to Sundays only

Most evenings are spent at leisure around the camp



ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

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Weekends – Sunday only

Vaalwater Town and Township Tour

10h00 – 13h00: Visit local art gallery, curio shop, craft market, cultural heritage museum.

13h00: Lunch included

14h00 – 16h30: Traditional beer brewery and visit to Lapa for traditional dancing and music.

Horse Riding Excursion

2 hour bush ride from 08h30 – 10h30

Lunch included

Weekend activities can be booked and paid for locally. Or pre-booked with GAP Africa and paid locally.



ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

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Life on the reserve



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BOOKING YOUR ADVENTURE

The next steps to the trip of a
lifetime!

WHAT'S INCLUDED

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What is included?

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



NOT included

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

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

BOOKING YOUR ADVENTURE

AFRICA

Group webpage



Scan me!

Booking form



Scan me!



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