ARU WRITTLE
INFORMATION PACK

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

TRIP OVERVIEW

ARU Writtle – Booking Reference 4811

Travel Dates:

8th August – 22nd August 2026

Flights:

Flight No	Flight Date	Dept.	Dept. Time	Arr.	Arr. Time
VS449	08/08/2026	London Heathrow (LHR)	20:50	Johannesburg (JNB)	08:50 + 1 Day
VS450	22/08/2026	Johannesburg (JNB)	20:15	London Heathrow (LHR)	06:30 + 1 Day

*Always check the flight timings on your final documents

Baggage Allowance – 1 piece of checked baggage @ 23kgs & 1 piece of hand baggage @ 10kgs and max dimensions 56x36x23 cms

Project:

Waterberg Wildlife & Veterinary Course - Entabeni

Trip Cost:

£2695.00 per person

£300.00 deposit

£1197.50 Instalment due 19/04/2026

£1197.50 Balance due 14/06/2026

PROJECT LOCATION

The Waterberg overview

ABOUT THE WATERBERG

A place that promotes the connection between people and nature

The Waterberg contains pristine habitats, abundant bird and wildlife and has a natural unspoilt beauty. The Waterberg is an escarpment of massive sandstone buttresses and outcrops, incorporating many rivers, streams and wetlands, stretching for 150 km in a long arc.

The Waterberg has many special and unique characteristics which is why UNESCO approved the area for biosphere reserve status in 2001.

The Waterberg is a critical conservation area for African wild dogs, with the last free-roaming pack in South Africa; black and white rhino, with the third largest population within South Africa; and the Cape Vulture, with the largest colony of 800 breeding pairs.

ABOUT ENTABENI

AFRICA

ENTABENI SAFARI CONSERVANCY

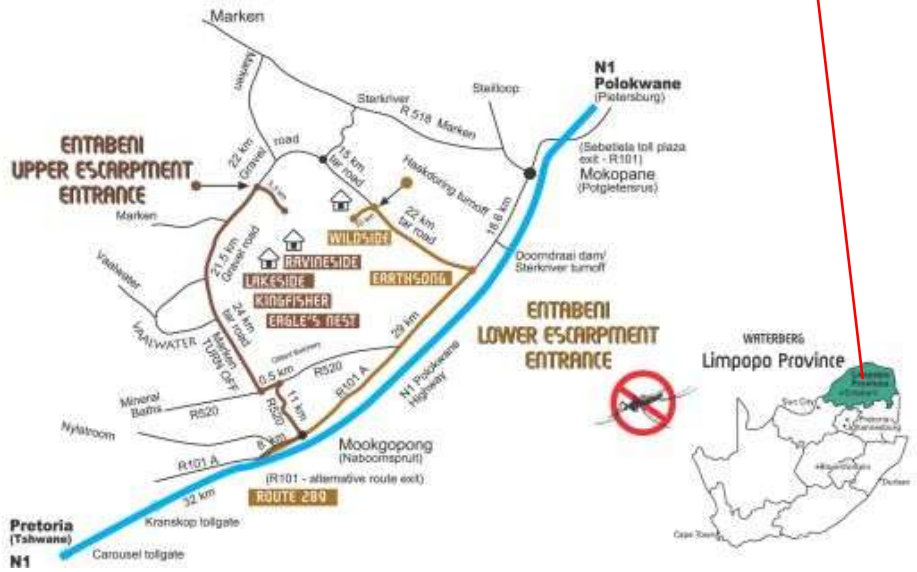
Location

The Waterberg Wildlife and Veterinary Course – Entabeni is based at the 22,000-hectare Entabeni Safari Conservancy in the Limpopo Province of South Africa.

Located a pleasant 4 hour drive from Johannesburg; in the **malaria-free** area of the Waterberg, Limpopo Province

Entabeni is set within a tranquil, natural setting boasting changing vistas, diverse eco-systems and a breath-taking mountainous backdrop. Entabeni is the integration of a 22,000 hectare Big 5 Game Reserve, a resort and luxurious lodges.

It boasts spectacular scenery, with mountains, waterfalls and unspoilt ravines.



ABOUT WELGEVONDEN

Welgevonden Game Reserve

Welgevonden is home to over 50 different recorded mammals, including the Big Five. There are rare and cryptic species too, such as brown hyena, aardwolf and aardvark.

The savanna bushveld abounds with antelope from the largest eland to the diminutive duiker with large herds of plains zebra and blue wildebeest as the most abundant herbivores. Apex predators including lion, hyena and cheetah as well as small carnivores like the black-backed jackal are never far. Megaherbivores; both rhino species and elephant thrive and have important roles in the ecosystem. It is the diversity of habitat on the reserve that encourages such a wide range of wildlife including over 300 bird species and rare reptiles.

At 36,000ha in size, Welgevonden Game Reserve lies in the Waterberg plateau, about 250km north of Johannesburg. Welgevonden protects a unique and special environment and the reserve's management is deeply committed to ongoing conservation research and development.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our conservation work in more detail

ABOUT THE WATERBERG

Your two project locations

Your trip is split between two locations, in the same province of South Africa. You will first observe a focused wildlife veterinary practice on a reserve in the Waterberg, Limpopo Province (**Entabeni Safari Conservancy**) before travelling to Welgevonden Game Reserve to work with their academic team and qualified rangers at the Waterberg Biomonitoring Project. Project locations and duration are as follows:

Itinerary

1 Night

Johannesburg

7 Nights

Entabeni Safari Conservancy – Waterberg – Limpopo Province

5 Nights

Waterberg Biomonitoring Project – Waterberg – Limpopo Province

ABOUT THE PROJECT: ENTABENI SAFARI CONSERVANCY

Our conservation work
in more detail

YOUR PROJECT

Waterberg Wildlife and Biomonitoring Course – Entabeni (7 Nights)

This course provides the opportunity for hands-on practical wildlife experience for pre-vet/vet nurses/technicians or those studying in the veterinary field.

Based at the reserve's student camp working directly with the monitoring team; this department runs and manages the day-to-day decisions and monitoring of the wildlife and ecosystem of the reserve.

The team and their work are crucial to the management and welfare of all wildlife on the reserve, as they monitor the animals' conditions, herd structures, locations and behaviours.

Time will be spent working with the reserve's research team.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Entabeni Safari Conservancy

- Introduction to Entabeni Safari Conservancy and Research Projects
- Rhino orphanage – assist with orphaned rhino calves
- Time spent with the research team conducting conservation activities

It's important to remember that wildlife does not work to an agenda, therefore activities may change at short notice!

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Monitoring the Entabeni Rhino Population

Behavioural observations, photos and GPS locations are recorded to document where the animals are occurring; keeping tabs on the localities and activities of White and Black Rhino on the reserve.

Importantly also monitor body condition, injuries, mating, calving, behaviour, herd structure etc.

YOUR PROJECT

The Rhino Orphanage

The Rhino Orphanage was the first-ever specialised, non-commercial centre dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, raising and release of orphaned rhinos back into the wild.

Although newborn rhinos can weigh up to 50kgs, they are essentially "helpless" and require protection so that they may survive and ultimately thrive.

Rhino calves and rhino mothers are closely bonded. Rhino young are fiercely protected by their mothers in the wild, so when a rhino mother is killed, the rhino orphan becomes particularly vulnerable, and their longevity is endangered. Under normal circumstances, rhino calves will stay with their mothers for around 3 years. For this reason, the rhino orphans in their care typically require the same intensity and timeframe of nurturing from the carers.

ABOUT THE PROJECT: WELGEVONDEN GAME RESERVE

Our conservation work
in more detail

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Welgevonden Biomonitoring Overview (5 Nights)

Welgevonden Game Reserve's conservation management practices are arguably some of the best in the world. This is largely due to management's continued efforts in obtaining robust data on the ecological functioning of the Reserve, ensuring a thorough understanding of ecosystem dynamics within the protected wilderness area. This is where the Biomonitoring Programme comes in. The programme was established in 2015 and has since been responsible for the collection of research data and dedicated monitoring of fauna and flora on the reserve. From monitoring herd dynamics and animal condition, to assessing the state and ongoing changes in the ecosystem, the programme offers participants a truly hands-on experience in the management of a world-class, Big Five reserve. All this data is then analysed and processed by the Research Ecologist and used to inform management decisions.

If you are looking to gain some experience in ecological monitoring or are simply looking for a way to get out into the bush in a useful and meaningful way, becoming a participant in the Welgevonden Biomonitoring Programme is the way to go!

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Your Conservation Programme – Biomonitoring Research Team

As part of your project, you will be heavily involved with the day-to-day field work conducted by the biomonitoring team. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Game transects – estimates of numbers, body condition and herd structure
- Telemetry tracking of collared animals
- White Rhino monitoring and condition scoring
- Camera Trap Surveys (Black Rhino and other cryptic animals)
- Nocturnal species ID and night game drive
- Predator monitoring
- Mortality/kill recording
- Visit temporary holding bomas (enclosures)
- Animal tracking
- Waterberg Wild Dog Project
- Collecting faecal samples for research
- Alien plant species eradication
- Vegetation Condition Assessment
- Waterberg Biodiversity Project Data Collection with experts in their fields

It's important to remember that wildlife does not work to an agenda, therefore activities may change at short notice!

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Research and Ecological Biomonitoring

Rhino monitoring – participants identify uniquely marked individual rhinos in the field using an identikit. Data is captured electronically in the field and later automatically downloaded to a secure database. Information recorded includes animal ID, location, social groupings, body condition, etc. The data is analysed by the research ecologists and used to make informed management decisions regarding the rhino population.

Predator monitoring – this includes all the large predators: lion, cheetah, leopard and spotted and brown hyaena. Individuals are occasionally collared for research and/or management purposes. Participants monitor these collared individuals using telemetry or GPS tracking technology. Camera trap surveys, in conjunction with Panthera, are conducted annually to determine the range and population dynamics of the resident leopard population as part of the larger Waterberg population. These camera traps are tailored for leopards, but capture photographs of the smaller, meso-predator population of the reserve – this is useful as these cryptic species are seldom seen otherwise.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Research and Ecological Biomonitoring

Game transects – pre-determined routes are driven along which game is counted. Transects are driven monthly during which the team collects data pertaining to animal species, body condition, herd structure and herd location. Analysis of this data provides an in depth understanding of the reserve's prey base and the population dynamics of the more important/common species.

Vegetation surveys – Grass species composition and biomass are determined on an annual basis. This information is used to understand the quality and quantity of available food for grazing species as well as helping to decide where best to establish fire breaks (an obstacle to the spread of fire). Woody (tree) monitoring occurs every five years and is used to determine: species composition, recruitment and growth rates and the impact of fire, elephant, browser and invertebrates on the woody plant layer.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Research and Ecological Biomonitoring

Plains monitoring – Welgevonden Game Reserve was not always a protected wilderness area with its early history rooted in agriculture. Upon conversion into a game reserve, many old agricultural fields were rehabilitated into grazing lawns. These fields, as well as the animals that make use of them, are monitored on a monthly basis to evaluate the effectiveness of this long-term programme.

Special Interventions – As these interventions occur sporadically, where possible, participants and volunteers will be given the opportunity to join and witness these special veterinary interventions which could include elephant collaring, rhino notching, predator captures and animal releases.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

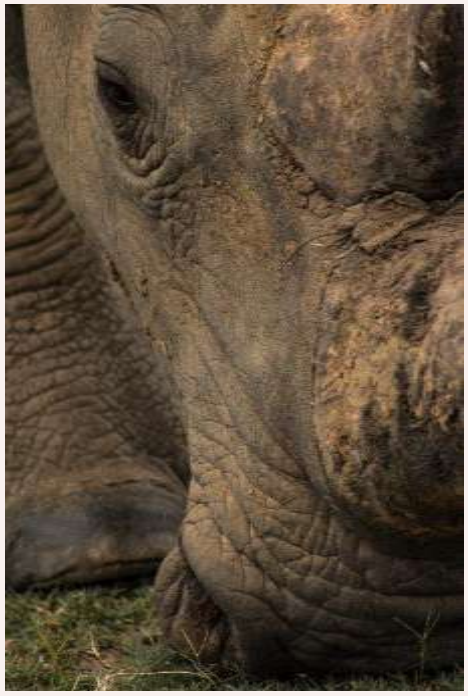
Rhino Monitoring Focused

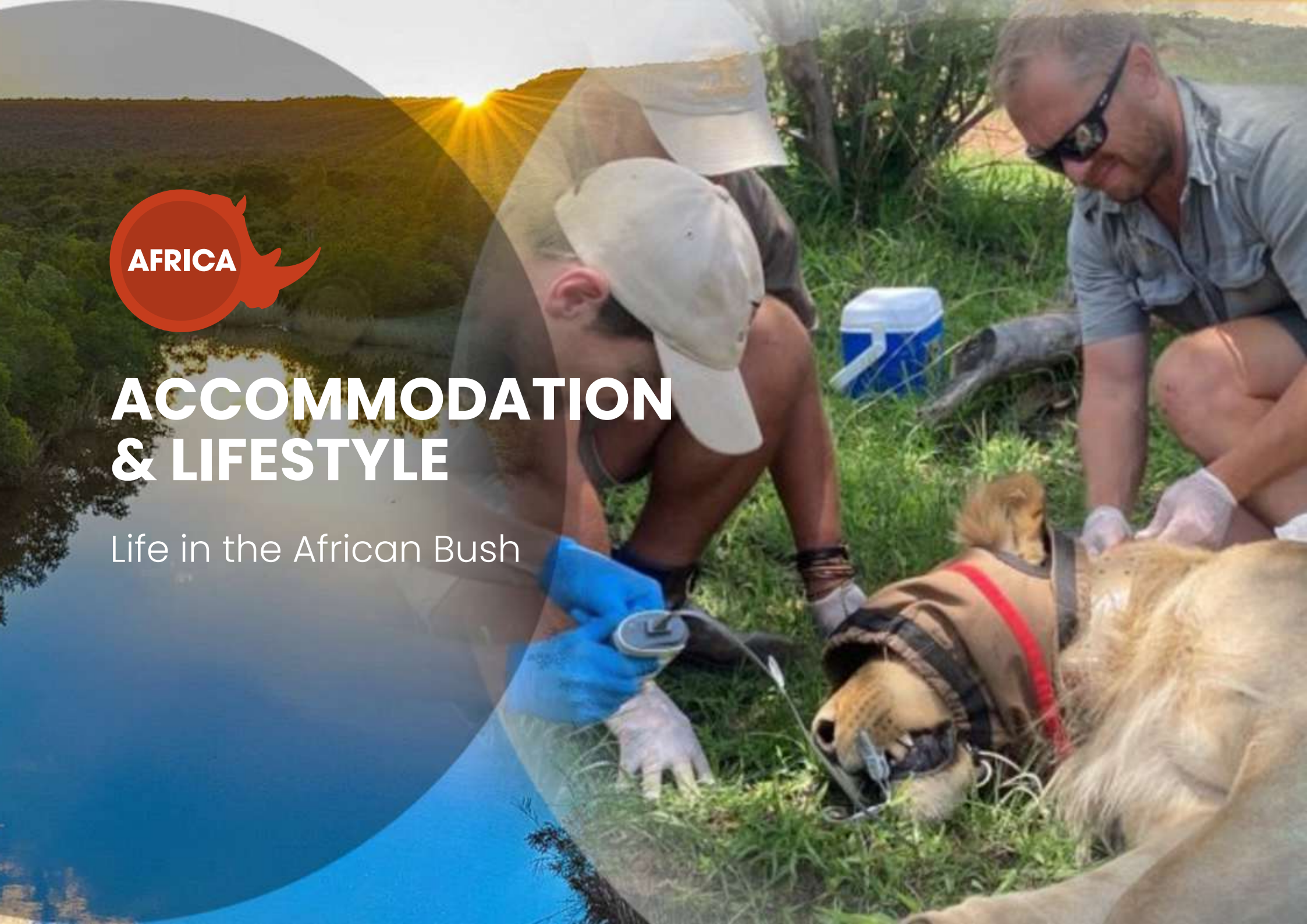
Welgevonden Game Reserve is a significant sanctuary for two rhino species. The reserve is home to an important population of southern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum)* with its conservation status of Near Threatened as well as Critically Endangered black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis).*

Welgevonden has a reputation for its strong, high-tech approach to anti-poaching; preventing criminals from entering even near the Reserve.

The Biomonitoring department has the very essential function of closely monitoring the rhino populations and participants have an active role in this. Modern technology is utilised and the team is supported by experienced scientists and managers. A rhino's life expectancy can reach over 40 years so the same college/institution or individual participant that returns regularly can see the same rhino through its life stages over all the years.

An extraordinary opportunity considering the current plight of the species.





ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Life in the African Bush

ARRIVAL

Airport Bird and Game Lodge, Johannesburg – First Night

For your first night you will be staying at the Airport Bird and Game Lodge Hotel situated around twenty minutes from the airport terminal. Rooms will be shared, and a buffet dinner and breakfast will be included.

You will leave the hotel nice and early the next morning, arriving at Entabeni by lunch time.

A representative from Shuttle King will meet you in the hotel reception.

The driver will stop at a shop on the way for you to get snacks, drinks etc.

If for any reason you cannot locate the representative, please call Terri on 27(0) 71 242 8838.

ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Waterberg - Entabeni Accommodation

You will stay in twin bedded rooms with ensuite facilities.

There are 4, 5 and 6 bedroom units each of which has an open plan layout with lounge and dining area and a fully equipped kitchen.

Evenings are spent at leisure around the campfire.

Only Sunday will be an off day to 'chill' in camp or do extra activities.

ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Waterberg - Welgevonden Accommodation

The student centre and camp is based on the reserve and boasts ten tents that sleep two people per tent in single beds, each tent also has lighting and electricity supply.

There are communal hot and cold showers and regular flushing toilets. There are communal facilities including a lecture room, canteen, lounge, entertainment area and storage fridge.

The centre also has access to Wi-Fi.

The camp is fenced off inside the boundaries of the reserve.

ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Food at the Project – Entabeni and Welgevonden

Ingredients for three meals a day are provided, on a self cook basis. Students will take part in communal cooking and keeping the kitchen tidy. This creates a vibrant and social atmosphere.

All meals are eaten together in the communal dining room; there is an outside area for dining as well.

Some days lunch will be at the accommodation; other days lunch will be brought into the field to be taken as a picnic. This depends on the activities either planned or unscheduled.

Dietary Requirements

Provision can be made for Vegetarian & Vegan diets and for those who have a medical condition such as Coeliac disease that requires a Gluten Free Diet and for those with severe allergies to dairy, eggs or nuts.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES & EXCURSIONS

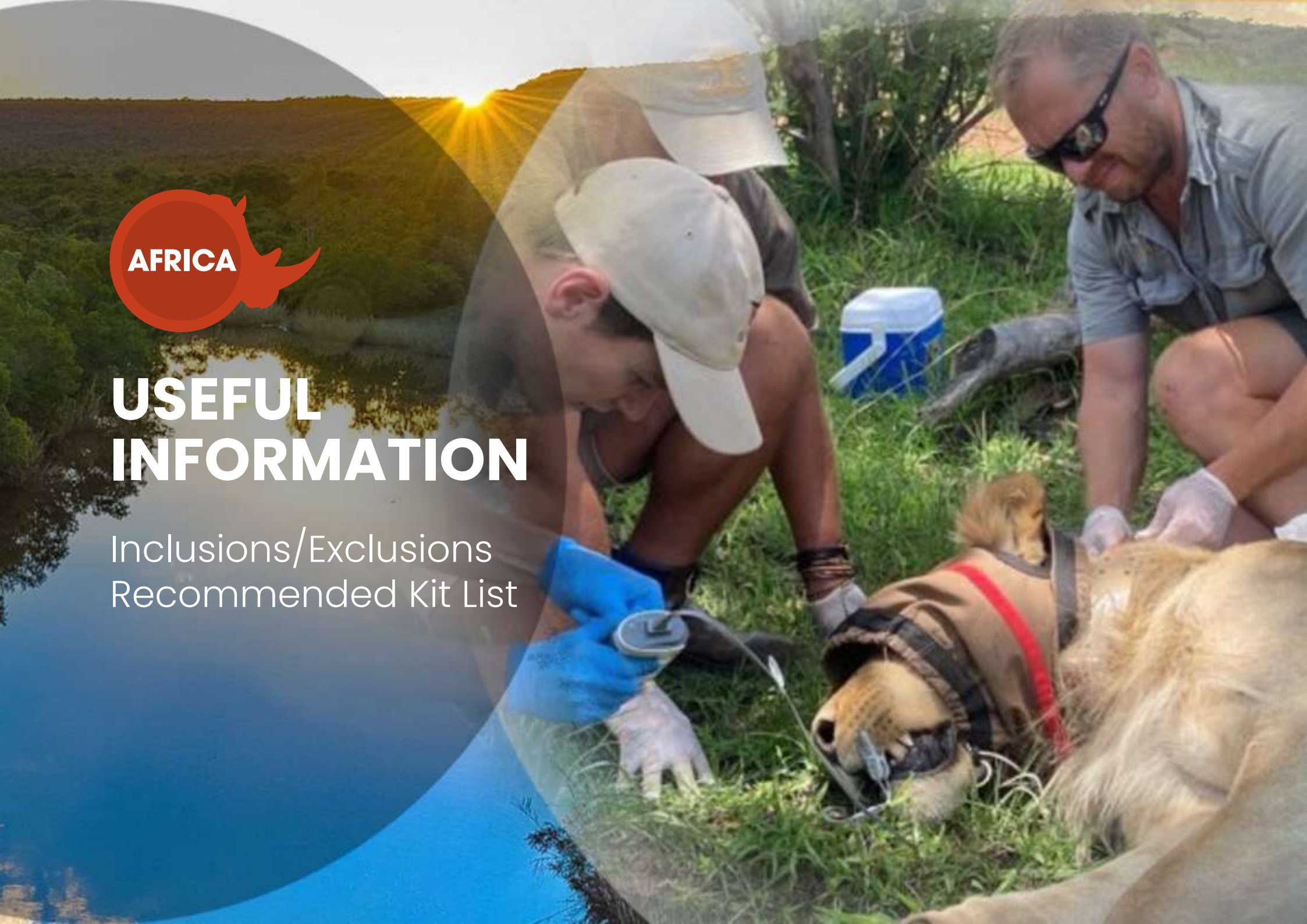
Activities/Excursions (own cost and optional)

There will be free time/days off, where you'll be able to do some additional activities at your **own cost**. These are **optiona**l.

All activities are booked and paid for (**cash** or, sometimes, **card**) upon arrival at the project.

More information will be given closer to the time. N.B Your travel insurance **must** cover you for any additional activites you choose to do.

Any activities booked and paid for locally are not covered under GAPAfrica Project's personal liability insurance.



USEFUL INFORMATION

Inclusions/Exclusions
Recommended Kit List

WHAT'S INCLUDED

What is Included?

- Flights
- 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

- UK Transfers
- Personal Travel Insurance*
- Meals on travel days – before arriving & after departing from project
- Any activities not specified as part of the project
- Visas/travel documents
- Tips

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

USEFUL INFORMATION

Suggested kit list

To allow for ease of transfer to the project a soft holdall/ soft suitcase is preferred.

- Short and long sleeve t-shirts
- Long work trousers and shorts (or work/zip-off trousers)
- Hiking boots/comfortable walking shoes to work in every day
- Waterproof jacket
- Sweatshirt/Fleece (Winter months pack plenty)
- Padded jacket/windbreaker (Winter months) although it can get very cold on an open vehicle even in summer
- Socks
- Underwear
- Change of casual clothes for evenings
- Sandals / comfy shoes to wear after work hours
- Warm hat (Winter only) / Hat for sun protection (all year)
- Gloves for warmth (Winter only)
- Working gloves
- Daypack rucksack
- Surgical gloves
- Swimwear
- Sunscreen and Sunglasses
- Personal medical items
- First aid kit
- Toiletries
- Tick / Insect repellent
- Water bottle
- Good torch

Other useful items:

- Binoculars
- Camera
- Power bank
- Stethoscope

* 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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