



**WILDLIFE ACT
LEOPARD CONSERVATION CENSUS**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Wildlife ACT is officially contracted by the international wild cat organisation, Panthera, to conduct Leopard population surveys within KwaZulu-Natal. Wildlife ACT will conduct a number of exciting, short-term Leopard Population Surveys throughout the year, using remote camera trapping survey methods on various game reserves in the Zululand region.

The **Leopard population camera trap survey** involves setting up or taking down the motion sensor cameras at different locations, checking the SD cards and recording data as well as helping with identikits for each animal if necessary. Volunteers can select this project in conjunction with the Endangered Species Conservation project sites. Most of our volunteers who come for more than **two weeks spend two weeks on the Leopard Census project and then do a multiple of two weeks sessions on our other project sites in Zululand.**



VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

- **Duration:** Minimum 2 weeks
- **Age:** 18 – 60+

PROJECT DETAIL

Wildlife ACT is officially contracted by the international wild cat organisation, Panthera, to conduct Leopard population surveys within KwaZulu-Natal. This project was started due to high hunting levels outside of the game reserves causing the Leopard populations within protected areas to decline. In response to this, Panthera, together with the provincial conservation authority Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, worked together to rewrite legislation regulating the trophy hunting and control of Leopards that may enter local communities surrounding the protected areas.

This project is continued, now with the aid of Wildlife ACT, to ensure that the new regulations are adhered to and are sustainable for the years to come. **For more information visit, http://www.panthera.org/programs/leopard/munyawana_leopard-project.**

With the use of Camera-Trap Surveys we are able to estimate the density and gauge population trends over time. At specifically chosen reserves, the project sets up a minimum of 30 camera-trap stations, each of which has two camera-traps (to capture the left and right-hand side of the animal).

The stations are set-up along roads, animal paths and other areas (such as river beds or drainage lines) which Leopards may frequent. The surveys are spread across an area that covers 100 – 120 km² and each survey runs for 50 days before moving to a different reserve. Estimates of Leopard population size in any given area are determined using capture-recapture models, which is why this survey will run within KwaZulu-Natal for up to 5 years.



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES & SCHEDULE

As a volunteer, you will be involved in helping the Wildlife ACT monitors with a variety of tasks - depending on what stage of the survey you arrive. You could possibly help with the setting up or taking down of the motion sensor cameras to move the project to a different Reserve/location.

Predominantly though, you will be aiding with the downloading of images from the cameras, recording the captured data, managing the camera-trap sites as well as helping with identikits for each animal if necessary. You will also collate the photographs of non-target, priority species that might be present on the reserve - ***depending on the location of the survey at that time, and what species occur on that particular reserve*** - (for example species like Black and White Rhino, Elephant, Lion, Cheetah, Wild Dog), to the Reserve Management for monitoring purposes.

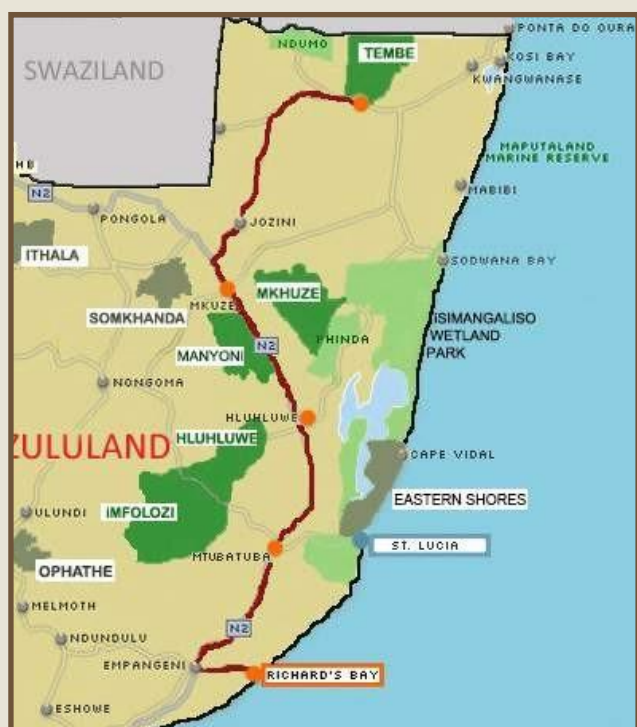
FREE TIME:

Camera download days are usually only 4 days of the week. The camera downloads take on average 4 – 7 hours on any given day. Once the selected camera-sites have been downloaded for the day, and the photographs have been correctly catalogued, you will have some free time. Of course you will also have at least 2 days of the week which will also count as free time. During this time you can either do personal tasks (eg. Laundry, catch up on some sleep if you have jet-lag, write e-mails to family members) or, depending on which reserve the survey is currently at, you could visit a bird hide, engage in a community museum etc.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

We collect arriving volunteers from Richards Bay, which is our closest big town. You will have to book your INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT to arrive at JOHANNESBURG, and then book a short internal connecting flight, from Johannesburg to RICHARDS BAY.

For arrival, participants can choose to either fly to Richards Bay on the **SUNDAY, and to then overnight** at a B&B close to the Airport, OR to arrive on either of the following flights arriving in Richards Bay **on the MONDAY: at 07:25 AM; 09:15 AM, or at 12:50 PM**, if you prefer not to overnight in Richards Bay on Sunday.



ARRIVAL FLIGHT:

The Wildlife ACT vehicle collects ALL participants from **Richards Bay Airport at 12:50 on MONDAY.**

Please ensure therefore that you book one of the following flights, arriving in Richards Bay at:

07:25 AM; 09:15 AM; 12:50 PM; 16:35 PM or 18:15 PM on the SUNDAY,

OR

at 07:25 AM; 09:15 AM; or 12:50 PM on the MONDAY.

(**On Mondays, No Flights Arriving Later Than 12:50 Pm Will Be Suitable.)

Important Note: Please be aware that if you arrive on a morning flight on the **MONDAY**, you will have a few hours to wait until the transport service arrives to collect all arriving volunteers at 12:50. We suggest you wait in the small coffee shop within the Richards Bay Airport.



DEPARTURE FLIGHT:

The Wildlife ACT vehicle drops off ALL participants at Richards Bay Airport at 11:30AM on MONDAY.

Please ensure therefore that you book one of the following flights, departing from Richards Bay at: **13:10 PM; 14:45 PM; or 17:00 PM on the MONDAY** of your departure.

Important Note: Please do not book flights departing from Richards Bay earlier than 13:10 PM, since we will simply not be able to get participants to the airport in time, from the reserves.



OVERNIGHT OPTIONS NEAR THE AIRPORT:

We will provide you with a **List of 5 RECOMMENDED accommodation venues near the Airport in Richards Bay.**

If you arrive on the **SUNDAY**, any of these 5 accommodation venues can collect you from the Airport, and they have agreed to bring you back to the Airport on the **MONDAY**, for collection by our vehicle.

As a Wildlife ACT volunteer, this transfer **from the B&B accommodation BACK to the Richards Bay Airport on the Monday** will be provided by the B&B at no extra cost to you – thereby making the collection of all participants more efficient from our side (rather than driving around to multiple accommodation options around Richards Bay to collect everyone – which can take up to an hour or more, on busy arrival days).
**You will need to request this Monday Airport drop-off service as a “Wildlife ACT volunteer”, in your booking enquiry with the overnight accommodation.*

If a participant chooses any **other/different accommodation option** in Richards Bay, then they will need to **arrange and pay for their own taxi** to get back to the Airport - by 12:30 - on the Monday.



TRANSFER TO THE PROJECT SITE:

The **Wildlife ACT vehicle** collects ALL participants at **RICHARDS BAY AIRPORT** at **12:50**, on Monday.

Participants making their own way to the Airport, should be at the Airport by 12:30 PM, to ensure they are not late. There is a small coffee shop inside the airport where you can safely wait (you can even plan to arrive at the airport even earlier and get a lunch snack before departure, if you have not already eaten).



Our starting dates for 2020 are as follows:

- 13 or 27 January
- 10 or 24 February
- 09 or 23 March
- 06 or 20 April
- 04 or 18 May
- 01, 15 or 29 June
- 13 or 27 July
- 10 or 24 August
- 07 or 21 September
- 05 or 19 October
- 02, 16 or 30 November
- 14 or 28 December

LOCATION

Currently the survey is operating on various game reserves in Zululand, including: Somkhanda Game Reserve, the Eastern Shores Section of iSimangaliso Wetland Park, Ithala Game Reserve, Manyoni Private Game Reserve, uMkhuze Game Reserve and Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Other sites are added annually, for once-off surveying.



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Please scan the QRcode for more information.

