



**ENDANGERED  
SPECIES CONSERVATION PROJECT**



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ZULULAND, SOUTH AFRICA

Wildlife ACT was founded and has always existed to support real conservation work where it is needed most. Numerous Game Reserves within South Africa cannot afford to fund a dedicated monitoring team within their boundaries, due to budget limitations and staff shortages. Wildlife ACT has come to these reserves with the proposal to provide this priority species Monitoring service, **free of charge**, in order to ensure the safety of these endangered species.

Our projects on each of the **five different Game Reserves** on which we work have been **approved and contracted** directly by the **Management authority** of each Reserve, to perform this critical and essential conservation work for those Reserves, at no cost to the reserve themselves.

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We are therefore **100% dependent on funding** from paying volunteers, in order to **perform the work we are doing.**

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Getting involved with Wildlife ACT means that you can **actively help endangered and priority wildlife** species conservation. The reserves on which we work mainly focus on research into African Painted Dog, Cheetah, Black Rhino and Vultures; however, Elephant, Lion, Leopard and White Rhino are also monitored.



# COVID-19 PROCEDURES & PROTOCOLS

At Wildlife ACT we are applying the comprehensive tourism industry COVID-19 protocols that enable us to operate safely. In fact, given that we work in very small teams, that our research accommodation camps are within a restricted area of the Reserve where not even tourists are allowed entry, and that our work is conducted while seated on the back of open-air vehicles, out here in these remote locations – we are confident that joining us will simply be among the safest places for you to be.

South Africa has been fortunate in that our strict, early lockdown allowed us to significantly limit the transmission of COVID-19 within our country, and our hospitals are well prepared and not overburdened. All passengers arriving to South Africa's airports will be required to present a mandatory negative COVID-19 test result not older than 72 hours, and to complete a Medical and Travel declaration (including any underlying health issues and their recent travel history going back 30 days), as well as having their temperature recorded on arrival.

We do request that our participants self-isolate as much as possible during the time leading up to the arrival day. While in transit, passengers will be required to follow standard COVID-19 protocols (wearing a face-mask, distancing from others as much as possible, and sanitising consistently).

Our accommodation Camps, monitoring vehicles and monitoring equipment are thoroughly sanitised on a regular basis, with particular emphasis on regularly disinfecting commonly used surfaces. Bedrooms are sanitised with disinfectant foggers between departures and arrivals.

All shared spaces, including kitchens, ablutions, offices, lounging and dining areas are cleaned regularly, while participants will be taking responsibility to remain cautious and sanitise their hands and their surroundings before and after making use of a shared space. Participants are also encouraged to make use of our camps' comfortable and aerated communal areas that are situated outside when relaxing/dining/working together as a group.

Our staff members residing at the Camps also have a mandatory protocol in place to limit exposure, while also being practical in order for them to efficiently carry out their work. In this way, staff and volunteers work together to protect one another while we carry out this vital conservation work.



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**Wildlife ACT takes COVID-19 seriously and believe we all have a role to play to prevent the spread. It is each individual's responsibility to follow the basic guidelines of sanitation, wearing of masks, and social distancing, while also allowing for a practical and enjoyable work environment.**

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## OUR PARTNERS

We are the **only conservation volunteer organisation** in South Africa who are supported by and working with high profile organisations such as the WWF, the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), Wildlands Conservation Trust and other well-known conservation NGO's, as well as working with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (the provincial conservation authority). We are also officially contracted by the international wild cat organisation, Panthera, to conduct Leopard monitoring surveys within KwaZulu-Natal.



## PROJECT LOCATIONS

**Wildlife ACT projects are located across 5 different locations in Zululand, Northern KwaZulu-Natal:**

- The iMFOLOZI SECTION of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.
- The HLUHLUWE SECTION of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.
- Manyoni Private Game Reserve
- uMkhuze Game Reserve.
- Tembe National Elephant Park.



## WHO CAN JOIN THE TEAM?

Anyone from the **ages of 18 to 65+** is welcome to join us; there is usually a wide mixture of ages within the participants joining our projects. As far as possible, we do our best to place participants of similar ages together, as we find that this best facilitates group cohesion. All you need is to be in **fairly good physical condition**, be able to understand and **communicate in English** and have an open mind & enthusiastic attitude with the passion to make a difference! All training and supervision will be provided, so no prior qualifications, skills or previous experience are required.

We only accept a maximum of **6 volunteers** at any given time on each of the reserves on which we work. We find this keeps the team small and efficient providing you with insights into real conservation work.



## WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

**Volunteers will assist the wildlife monitor in all day-to-day aspects of monitoring, including (where necessary):**

- The daily tracking and locating of priority species wildlife in the wild, seated on an open 4x4 vehicle, using radio telemetry equipment.
- Mapping the sightings using GPS equipment.
- You will be taught how to use the equipment.
- Observing animal behaviour (e.g. Painted Dog pack dynamics) for research purposes.
- Photographing and creating identity kits (for recently-reintroduced or relocated animals).
- Periodically setting up camera traps at watering holes and game trails.
- Assisting with ongoing game counts if needed.



**Depending on how long you join our team for and the time of year you visit, you could be fortunate enough to participate in one of the following activities, which occur strictly as and when the need arises:**

- Radio collaring of animals.
- Notching (identity marking) of animals such as Rhino.
- Night tracking excursions – for example Hyaenas.
- Animal Call-Ups (for example Lion)
- Relocation or re-introduction of endangered species.
- Vulture counts and nest surveys.
- Bird ringing & alien plant control.



**We cannot guarantee what activities will be happening over the time you are with us; our volunteers simply help out in these cases wherever the Reserve Management identify a particular need.**

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*As mentioned, the **primary function** of our teams is to provide the **vital monitoring service** for these reserves, and that does take up the majority of our time, since tracking the animals can be a time-consuming task!*

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Each Reserve has a different conservation management focus. While the project does plan & follow basic schedules, the nature of the work dictates that the animals and their environment are our **number one priority**, and therefore our schedules may at times have to be altered due to unforeseen circumstances or incidents within this wild and dynamic environment.



## WHAT WILL A “TYPICAL DAY” LOOK LIKE?

**Volunteers leave camp before sunrise**, seated on bench-seats on the back of the open 4x4 tracking vehicle. The team will locate the endangered species animals that the wildlife monitor has earmarked for the morning using radio telemetry equipment that receives radio signal from the collars which are fitted onto the priority species animals.

Once the team has successfully sighted the animals, you will observe them for as long as necessary, record the data and then move on the next animal/species on the daily monitoring schedule.

Each day you will have **free time during the midday period** when it is hot and most animals are inactive (resting in the shade). During these few hours over the midday period you are welcome to read, sleep, eat, play cards or board games, or simply enjoy the animal and bird activity within and around your accommodation.

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If you would like to **contribute** in some way to the **maintenance** of the accommodation camp itself, you are most welcome to do so – please let us know if you are **“handy” with tools** and would like the opportunity to contribute in this way and we will alert your monitor that he/she may have some help arriving!

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You **head out again** on the vehicle between **2 - 3 PM** to follow up on those animals which were not located in the morning. You should be back in camp shortly after sunset, to start preparing supper and sit around the fire listening to the sounds of the bush and discussing the day's events.

At least **once a week**, you will have a **day set aside for administrative work** (data capture and analysis). This is a **vital** part of the monitoring process, as this valuable information, which Wildlife ACT and our volunteers gather, has **numerous management applications**, including the planning of successful introduction and removal strategies of priority wildlife species, as well as supplying information to the local conservation authorities.

Every day in the bush is different. We have a saying here: **“This is Zululand, not Disneyland!”** Some days you could try very hard to find certain animals, and not see them – other days, you could go looking for certain animals and end up seeing all “Big Five” in one morning. There are no guarantees! Some days can be a stretch and even laborious at times, like when we track one animal for a whole day and cover large distances without success. **But it is important.**



***This is not a safari operation, and we don't want to romanticize the work we do. It's not always pretty or easy, but it is always exciting and wonderful to be out in the beautiful reserve, enjoying the sights and smells of the bush, and knowing you are being part of something significant.***



## HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Should you choose to join us, our bookings run in **multiples of 2 weeks**, which means you can join us for 2 / 4 / 6 / 8 / 10 / 12 weeks, etc.

The opportunity to work on multiple Reserves depends on the length of your stay. If you stay for only 2 weeks, you will work on 1 Reserve, but for every additional 2 weeks you stay, the better your chance of experiencing another Reserve.

The earlier you make your booking, the better the chance of you being placed on the Reserve of your choice. Once bookings fill up, placements will be made based on available spaces.

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### PLEASE NOTE:

Since the nature of our work is dependent on the specific needs of the animals at any given time, specific placements are subject to change, should the need arise. We trust that our participants will be understanding of this, and willing to help wherever there is a need.

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Our starting dates for 2022, are as follows:

- 10 or 24 January
- 07 or 21 February
- 04 or 21 March
- 04 or 18 April
- 02, 15, 30 May
- 13 or 27 June
- 11 or 25 July
- 08 or 22 August
- 05 or 19 September
- 05 or 19 October
- 03, 14 or 31 October
- 14 or 28 November
- 12 or 26 December



## Our starting dates for 2023, are as follows:

- 09 or 23 January
- 06 or 20 February
- 06 or 20 March
- 03 or 17 April
- 01, 15 or 29 May
- 12 or 26 June
- 10 or 24 July
- 07 or 21 August
- 04 or 18 September
- 02, 16 or 30 October
- 13 or 27 November
- 11 or 25 December

## GETTING THERE



We collect all **arriving participants** from **RICHARDS BAY**, which is the closest Airport. 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. We do ask that participants confirm their placement booking with us, **BEFORE** purchasing any flights!

For arrival, participants can choose to either fly into 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 **09:15 AM**, or at **12:50 PM**, if they prefer not to overnight on Sunday.

**Flights arriving later than 12:50 on the Monday are TOO LATE for us to collect you!**

## ARRIVAL FLIGHT



The transport service will collect participants from at the Richards Bay Airport at **12:50 PM on the MONDAY**. Please ensure therefore that you book one of the following flights, arriving in Richards Bay at:

- 14:30 PM; 16:15 PM or 18:10 PM on the **SUNDAY**,
- OR, at 07:25 AM; 09:15 AM; or at 12:50 PM on the **MONDAY**. (\*\*NO FLIGHTS ARRIVING AFTER THAN 12:50 PM WILL BE SUITABLE, ON THE MONDAY.)



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### Important Note:

Please be aware that if you arrive on a morning flight, you will have a few hours to wait until the transport service arrives to collect all arriving volunteers from Richards Bay Airport at 12:50PM. We suggest you wait in the small coffee shop within the Richards Bay Airport. You will be comfortable and safe there and they sell beverages & light meals/snacks so you can sit & read or work on your laptop.

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## DEPARTURE FLIGHT



The transport service will **drop off participants** at the Richards Bay Airport at 11:30 AM on the MONDAY.

Please ensure therefore that you **book one of the following flights**, departing from Richards Bay at:

- 13:10PM;15:00PM;16:35 PM;or18:40PM on the MONDAY of your departure.
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### Important Note:

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

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## OVERNIGHT OPTIONS NEAR THE AIRPORT

All **5 accommodation venues listed** in the attached document will **COLLECT** our participants from the Richards Bay Airport, on the **Sunday**. (This airport collection is included in the listed accommodation price). These 5 venues have also ALL agreed to transport our participants **BACK** to the Richards Bay Airport on the **Monday** – FREE OF CHARGE – thereby making collection quicker from our side. Please make sure to **request this service as a Wildlife ACT volunteer**, in your booking enquiry with them.

## COLLECTION FROM THE AIRPORT

We will then **collect all the participants** together, at the RICHARDS BAY AIRPORT, at **12:50 PM**, on the **Monday**. Those participants who choose to arrive on the earlier flight on the Monday, will simply wait at the Airport for the 12:50PM collection. (There is a small coffee shop within the Airport, where participants can safely wait).

If participants book any other accommodation in Richards Bay, they will need to arrange and pay for their own taxis to get back to the Airport on Monday.

Participants will need to be at the Airport **NO LATER THAN 12:30 PM** if they plan to make their own way to the Airport.



### CONTACT US:

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