

# **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 **three different protected areas** 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 Wild Dogs, Cheetah, Black Rhino, Vultures and Lion; however, Elephant, Leopard, Ground Hornbill, and White Rhino are also monitored.



## OUR PARTNERS

We are the **only conservation volunteer organisation** in South Africa that is supported by and works with high profile organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund (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 3 different locations in Zululand, Northern KwaZulu-Natal:

- The iMFOLOZI SECTION of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.
- The HLUHLUWE SECTION of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.
- The MANYONI PRIVATE GAME RESERVE.





## IMFOLOZI PROJECT

Our iMfolozi volunteers are based on top of a hill in the iMfolozi section of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, near a Section Ranger's outpost, in an eco-camp. The camp offers twin rooms, separate toilet and shower facilities, a rustic kitchen, decked sitting area and a barbecue area. There is a spectacular view of the Black iMfolozi River from a lookout post below the camp – affectionately called “the Rock”.



OVERVIEW



BEDROOM



COMMUNAL SPACE

## HLUHLUWE PROJECT

Hluhluwe volunteers are based at the Hluhluwe research camp, affectionately known as ‘Dung Beetle’, which is located on top of a hill in a coastal scarp forest. Dung Beetle camp is shared with other scientists and researchers carrying out studies in the park, although their rooms are separate from our Wildlife ACT participants. Our Wildlife ACT volunteers are accommodated in twin rooms, and have communal toilet and shower facilities. There is also a communal kitchen and barbecue area.



OVERVIEW



BEDROOM



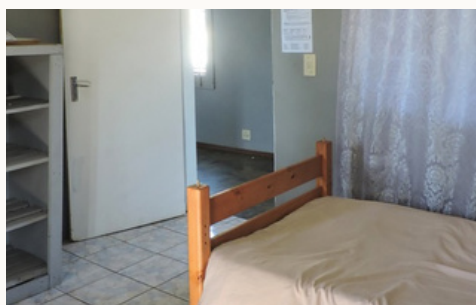
COMMUNAL SPACE

## MANYONI PROJECT

Manyoni Private Game Reserve volunteers are housed in a large and secluded house within the reserve. The camp offers twin rooms, an indoor bathroom, a large kitchen and a lovely patio dining area. The reserve has over 70 Mammal species and an exceptional diversity of birdlife.



OVERVIEW



BEDROOM



COMMUNAL SPACE

## WHO CAN JOIN THE TEAM?

Anyone from the ages of 18 to 70+ is welcome to join our Monitoring teams; there is usually a wide mixture of ages within the participants joining our projects. As far as possible, we try to place participants of similar ages together, as we find that this usually best facilitates group cohesion.

All training and supervision will be provided, so no prior qualifications, skills or previous experience is required. All you need is to be able to understand and communicate in English, and have an open mind & enthusiastic attitude, with the passion to make a difference!

We only accept a maximum of 6 volunteers at any given time on each of the Protected Areas 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. African Wild 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 along game trails.
- Assisting with herbivore game counts, if required by Reserve Management.



Depending on how long you join our team for, 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.
- Predator Call-Ups (for example Lion).
- Relocation or re-introduction of endangered species.
- Vulture counts or nest surveys.
- Bird ringing or tagging.



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Kindly note that 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 identifies 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 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 which receives radio signal from the collars which are fitted onto the priority species animals.

Once the team has successfully located the animals, the team will observe them for as long as necessary, record the data, and then move on the next pack/pride or 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 free to read, sleep, eat, play cards / board games, collectively begin evening meal preparations, or simply enjoy the animal and bird activity within and around your accommodation.







If you would like to contribute in some way to the **maintenance** of the research accommodation camp itself, you are most welcome to – 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 they may have some help arriving!

You head out again on the vehicle between 2 - 3 PM to follow up on any animals that were not located in the morning. You return to camp shortly after sunset, to finish preparing dinner, and sit around the fire listening to the sounds of the bush and discussing the day.

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. However, it IS all crucial to the long-term conservation of these species.



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



# SCHEDULED STARTING DATES

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, and willing to help wherever there is a need.



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### 2026 STARTING DATES:

- 05 or 19 January
- 02 or 16 February
- 02, 16 or 30 March
- 13 or 27 April
- 11 or 25 May
- 08 or 22 June
- 06 or 20 July
- 03, 17 or 31 August
- 14 or 28 September
- 12 or 26 October
- 09 or 23 November
- 07 December

### 2027 STARTING DATES:

- 04 or 18 January
- 01 or 15 February
- 01, 15 or 29 March
- 12 or 26 April
- 10 or 24 May
- 07 or 21 June
- 05 or 19 July
- 02, 16 or 30 August
- 13 or 27 September
- 11 or 25 October
- 08 or 22 November
- 06 December



## GETTING THERE

We collect **ALL** arriving participants from **RICHARDS BAY**, which is the closest Airport.

You will need to book your International flight to land at Johannesburg (O.R. Tambo International Airport), and then book a short domestic (internal) flight, from Johannesburg (JNB) to Richards Bay (RCB).

We do ask that participants confirm their placement booking with us, **BEFORE** purchasing any flight tickets!.

## ARRIVAL FLIGHT

For your **ARRIVAL** flight (on the Monday), you will need to book a flight arriving to **RICHARDS BAY AIRPORT** at 12:00 PM (or any earlier flight that day).

Any flight that arrives to Richards Bay **LATER** than 12:00 midday will **NOT** be suitable, since we will not be able to get all participants to the various project locations, in time before the Reserve Gates close.

If participants cannot find flights to fit in with the timing guidelines for Arrival Monday, they will need to fly in to Richards Bay on the **SUNDAY** and **OVERNIGHT** near the Airport, and **MAKE THEIR WAY BACK to the Airport by 11:45** on the Monday, to meet the Driver.

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### IMPORTANT NOTE:

**Please be aware that if you arrive on the Monday early morning flight arriving at 07:40 AM, you will have a few hours to wait until the transport service arrives to collect all our arriving volunteers from Richards Bay Airport at 11:45 AM.**

**There is a small coffee shop within the Richards Bay Airport. You will be safe to wait there, and they sell beverages & snacks so you can sit & read, or work on your laptop.**

**[\*If you are planning to watch or read content on your electronic devices while you wait, please be sure to download ALL your content prior to leaving your home country, as the Richards Bay Airport is extremely small and does not always have a reliable WiFi. If you plan to purchase a South African SIM card for your mobile phone, please do so at JOHANNESBURG Airport, or alternatively, set up an e-SIM before you leave your home country.]**





## DEPARTURE FLIGHT

For your DEPARTURE flight on the Monday, you will need to book a flight departing from RICHARDS BAY AIRPORT at 12:25 PM (or any later flight that day).

Any flight that departs from Richards Bay EARLIER than 12:25 will NOT be suitable, since we will not be able to get all participants from the various project locations, to the Airport in time for check-in.

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### IMPORTANT NOTE:

**The location of the projects in relation to Richards Bay is several hours' drive – please ensure that you are aware of and prepared for this journey (bring a water bottle and a snack).**



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## OVERNIGHT OPTIONS NEAR THE AIRPORT

Participants who need or choose to overnight, should please book Accommodation options situated CLOSE TO the Richards Bay Airport (i.e. within the “BIRDSWOOD” suburb of Richards Bay).

The “Fish Eagle Inn”, “Serendipity Guesthouse”, “Woodpecker Inn” and “Gecko Inn” options (all located within 5 kilometres of the Airport), have all been used by our previous participants, since you can ASK these venue options whether they would be willing or able to collect you from the Airport, given their close proximity.

*(\*This is not an automatic service they offer, so please politely enquire with them about this possibility, when making your booking.)*

Please make sure to **request a shuttle back to the AIRPORT for the Monday**, in your booking enquiry with the Accommodation option you choose to book.

*If you do have the ability to CHOOSE to arrive on the Sunday, many of our volunteers have commented that booking a flight arriving to Richards Bay on the Sunday has been PREFERABLE, since it allows a chance to get a good night's sleep after the long flight, and before joining our teams to begin the conservation work!*

**CAUTION:** Please be advised that accommodation options in the Meerensee area, or near the Tuzi Gazi Waterfront, are significantly further from the Airport in terms of travel time (30 minutes' drive), and traffic congestion on that busy route may cause additional delays.

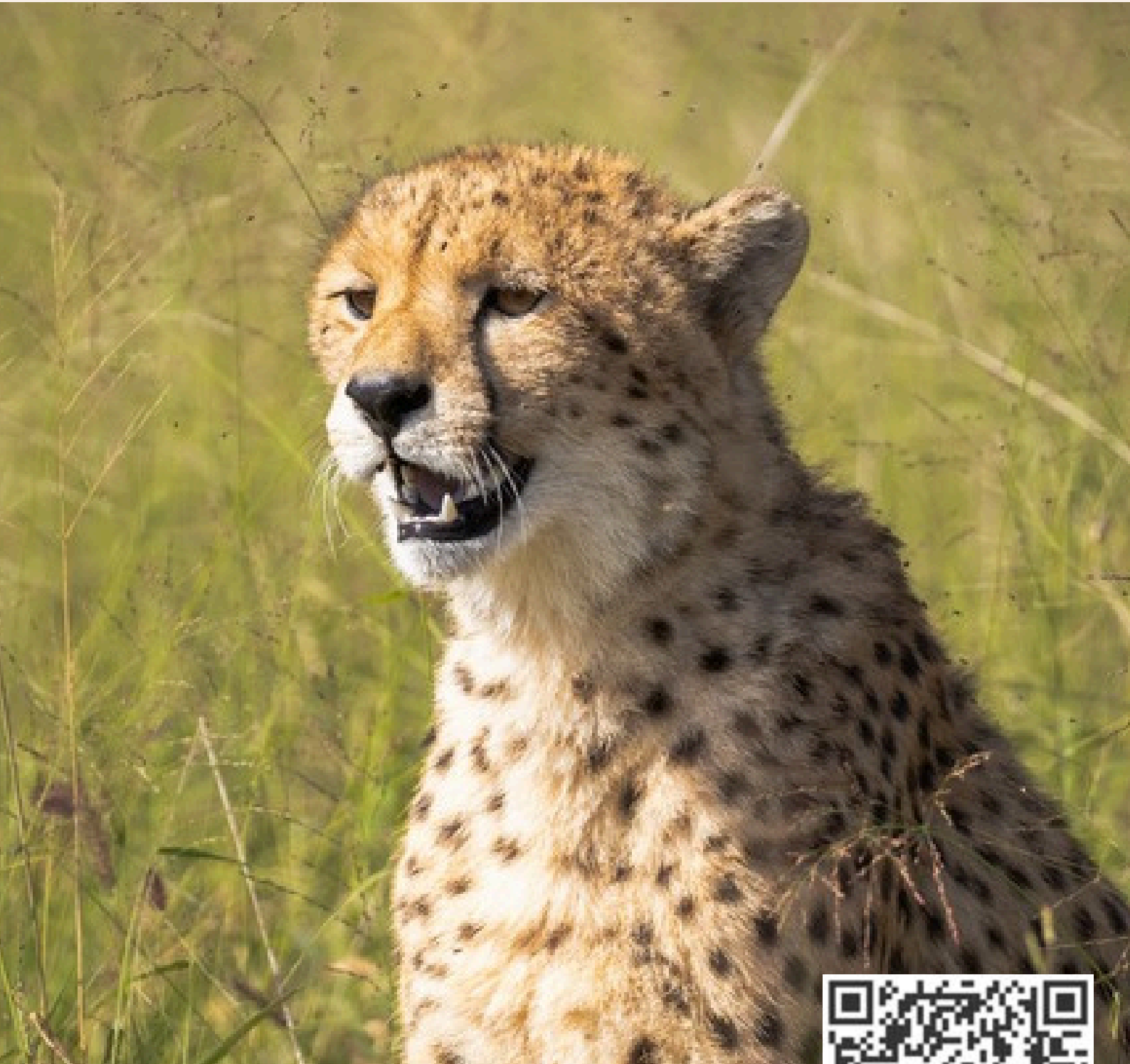
## COLLECTION FROM THE AIRPORT

The Driver will be provided with all arriving participants' photographs, and he will be waiting INSIDE THE SMALL ARRIVALS HALL of the Airport at 11:45 AM, holding a “Welcome Wildlife ACT Volunteers” sign; and a page listing ALL arriving participants' names.

Once all participants have met up with the Driver, the vehicle will depart from the Airport and drive northwards up the N2 to drop off participants for each project.

The Wildlife ACT Monitor from each project will be waiting to collect their new participants. You will then be transported the remaining distance to the project Research Camp inside the Reserve, on the back of the OPEN 4x4 Monitoring vehicle.




# WILDLIFE ACT LOOKS FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!



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