

**ENDANGERED SPECIES
CONSERVATION PROJECT**



WILDLIFE ACT
FOCUSED CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION PROJECT 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.

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

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 Dog, Cheetah, Black Rhino and Vultures; however, Elephant, Lion, Leopard and White Rhino are also monitored.

OUR PARTNERS

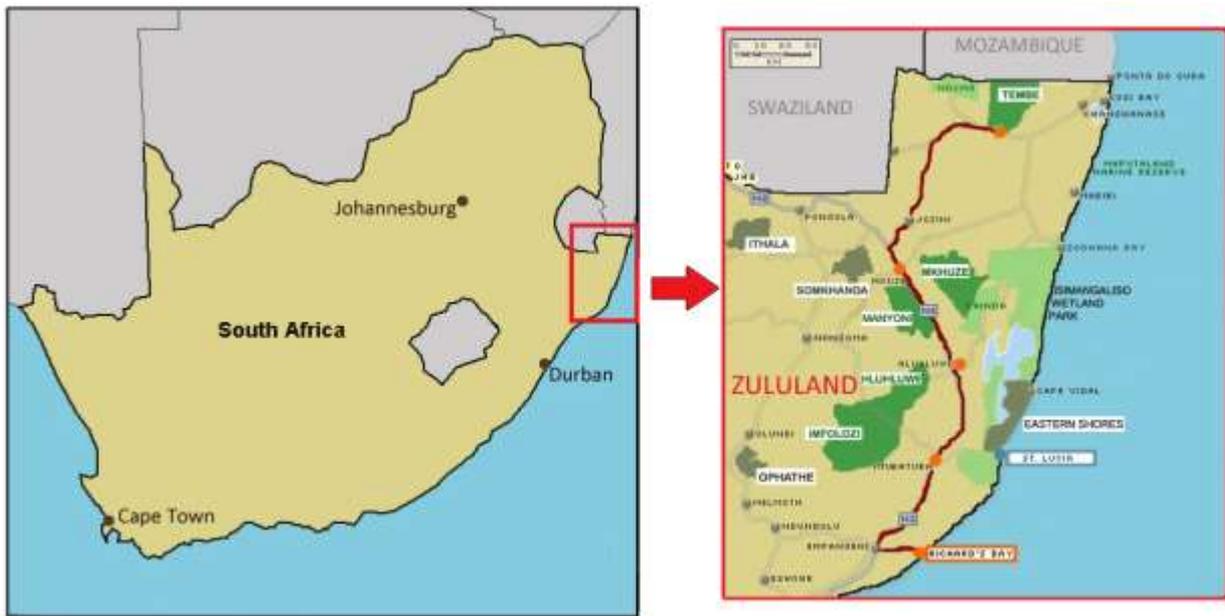
We are the only conservation volunteer organisation in South Africa who are supported by and working with high profile organisations such as **the WWF**, the **Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT)**, **Wildlands Conservation Trust** and other well known conservation NGO's, as well as working with **Ezemvelo 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 [- PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS Zululand Rhino Reserve (ZRR)]**
- **Mkhuze Game Reserve**
- **Tembe Elephant Park**



WHO CAN JOIN THE TEAM?

Anyone from the ages of 18 to 70+ 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 and 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 5 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. wild dog pack dynamics) for research purposes.
- Photographing and creating identity kits (for recently reintroduced/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.

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!

Each Reserve has a different focus in terms of the work being done. While the project does plan and follow basic schedules, the nature of the work being done 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 at dawn (just 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.

[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 to the fact that he/she may have some help arriving in this department!]

You head out again on the vehicle between 2-3pm 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 where there are spaces available.**

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.*

Our starting dates for **2017** are as follows:

- * 02, 16 or 30 January
- * 13 or 27 February
- * 13 or 27 March
- * 10 or 24 April
- * 08 or 22 May
- * 05 or 19 June
- * 03, 17 or 31 July
- * 14 or 28 August
- * 11 or 25 September
- * 09 or 23 October
- * 06 or 20 November
- * 04 December.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

We collect arriving volunteers from **Richards Bay**, which is our closest big town.

Most volunteers fly in to the Richards Bay Airport, some arrive on the **Greyhound bus from Durban**, and some **make their own way** up to meet at the Richards Bay Airport.

GETTING HERE:

Participants can either fly in to Richards Bay on the **SUNDAY, and overnight** at a B&B close to the Airport,

OR:

to arrive on the early morning flight arriving in Richards Bay at **07:25 AM on the MONDAY**, if they prefer not to overnight.



ARRIVAL flight:

*Transport will **collect participants from Richards Bay Airport at 12:00 PM on the MONDAY.** Please ensure therefore that you book one of the following flights, arriving in Richards Bay at:*

- **14:30 PM or 18:10 PM on the SUNDAY,**
- **OR, at 07:25 AM on the MONDAY. (**NO FLIGHTS ARRIVING LATER THAN 07:25 AM WILL BE SUITABLE, ON THE MONDAY.)**

Please be aware that if you book the 07:25 AM arrival flight, you will have a few hours to wait until the transport service arrives to collect all arriving volunteers from Richards Bay Airport at 12:00. We suggest you wait in the small coffee shop within the Richards Bay Airport. You will be comfortable and safe there, and they do sell beverages and light meals/snacks so you can sit and read or work on your laptop.

DEPARTURE flight:

*Transport drops off participants at Richards Bay Airport at **12:00 PM on the MONDAY.** Please ensure therefore that you book one of the following flights, departing from Richards Bay at:*

- **14:40 PM, 15:05 PM, 16:20 PM, or 18:40 PM on the MONDAY of your departure.**

***Important Note:** Please **do not** book flights departing from Richards Bay earlier than 12:00 noon, as we will simply not be able to get you to the airport in time, from the reserve.*

COLLECTION FROM THE AIRPORT:

We have compiled a list of 5 accommodation venue options that participants may book with, if arriving on the Sunday.

These 5 venues will COLLECT our participants from the Richards Bay Airport, on the Sunday – FREE OF CHARGE. These 5 venues will also transport our participants BACK to the Richards Bay Airport on the Monday – FREE OF CHARGE .

We will then collect all the participants together, at the RICHARDS BAY AIRPORT, at 12:00 midday, on the Monday.

Those participants who choose to arrive on the 07:25 AM flight on the Monday, will simply wait at the Airport for the 12:00 noon 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 taxi's to get back to the Airport on Monday.

Participants will need to be **at the Airport NO LATER THAN 12:00 midday** if they plan to make their own way to the Airport.



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