



WILDLIFE TRACKING COURSE CLOSE UP

Held in the stunning Botswana wilderness, the wildlife tracking course is an opportunity to experience the thrill of tracking Africa's big game while camping in a raw and wild environment, home to a unique population of elephants moving freely between three countries of southern Africa. You will learn safety in the bush and the ability to track animals without impacting on the natural ecosystem in which they (and you for two weeks) live. An intensive experience, the tracking course requires you to be physically and mentally fit. Although often at a slow pace, the walking is long and arduous and involves a lot of climbing up rocky outcrops, but affords you the opportunity to study animals such as elephants and hyenas up close on ground level.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Week 1: Introduction and track identification

- Head into the bush by vehicle with the staff and all required equipment for the two weeks to set up camp in a predetermined location. Students will assist in the set-up of the camp, which will comprise of 2-man dome tents.
- Lectures and practical exercises on safety in the bush. Introduction to the course outlines and objectives.
- Introduction to tracking techniques, the role of the tracker and spotlighting techniques.
- Track identification, animal behaviour, movements and social structures
- Survival techniques and applications
- Revision from books. Practical test on track identifications in the field followed by braai and celebration

Week 2: Trailing component

- Introduction, techniques and application of tracking and trailing an animal on foot from the tracks and signs that it has left behind.
- Each member of the course will lead the group on foot on the trail of a high profile animal, a full day is allocated to each individual. Coaching will take place during the trailing. Conclusion of course with a braai (barbeque) and celebration in the bush!
- Receive the Cyber Tracker Level 1 certificate if you obtain 70% in both components of the course.
- Pack up camp and transfer back to the airport.

"The tracking course was a truly memorable wildlife adventure, from Stuart whistling to get the birds singing while we were hiding behind a termite mound from elephants, to having our camp trashed by baboons and trailing lions on foot!"

Steve Brophy





WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

The Tuli block's resident populations include elephant, lion, leopard, cheetah, giraffe and eland. In addition to the common plains game like wildebeest and zebra, there are troops of monkey and baboon, as well as populations of steenbok, the timid duiker, grysbok, impala, common waterbuck, bushbuck, and warthog. Also present are aardvark, aardwolf, bat-eared fox, African wild cat, spotted hyena, wild dog and black-backed jackal as well as a great diversity of bird life, with over 350 species having been recorded to date.

LOCATION

The course is held in the Tuli wilderness in southern Botswana, an area which forms part of the Limpopo-Shashe trans frontier conservation area, which also straddles the borders of South Africa and Zimbabwe allowing for natural migration of elephant herds and other animal species across historically established national borders.



FACILITIES

Accommodation: Students will be driven into the bush with all staff and all required equipment for the two weeks to set up camp in a predetermined location. Students will assist in the set-up of the camp, which will comprise of 2-man dome tents. Sleeping mats will be provided. Water will be obtained from a water trailer and lighting will be limited to paraffin lamps and torchlight. Ablution facilities will be very basic and will comprise of long-drop toilets and cold bucket showers in summer and fire-heated water in winter. Nights may be spent out on the ground with a watch fire and basic sleeping materials if we cannot make it back to the camp by nightfall during a trailing exercise.

Meal arrangements: Meals will be basic and may be eaten at unusual times of the day! All cooking is done on an open fire and it will not be possible to have any fresh fruit or vegetables. Meat required for the course duration will be sealed in cooler boxes with dry ice until required.

Laundry: Washing is done once a week by a domestic helper.

Nearest towns: Selebi-Phikwe in Botswana; Polokwane (formerly Pietersburg) in South Africa.

Time off: The first Sunday of the course will be a rest day.

Contact with home: Dependent on cellphone signal. Botswana time = GMT+2hrs. There is no internet access.

Transfers: Transfers to the Wildlife Tracking Course are done by road. The drive from Johannesburg airport takes approximately 8-9 hours depending on border control. The journey is broken up with a lunch stop and regular toilet breaks.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Airport: We meet all our volunteers personally at Johannesburg airport directly off the plane.





Road Safety: All drivers have Public Driving Permits and only new, air conditioned vehicles are used for transfers.

First Aid & Emergency: First aid Level 5 qualified personnel on site.

Medical: Doctors and hospital in Polokwane.

Reserve Insurance: Students will be required to sign an indemnity form.

IS THIS COURSE RIGHT FOR ME?

This course is an in depth study of tracking wild animals in the raw African bush equipping you with the necessary skills to pursue a conservation orientated career such as a professional field guide. This also provides an unusual two week break from the 9-5 workday routine! Please be aware that this course is extreme bush living, camping in dome tents with lots of moving around, life can be dusty, dirty and sweaty and is without any home comforts. We offer a discounted rate on this course in conjunction with any of our conservation projects; the perfect opportunity to put your new found skills and knowledge to use!

BOOKING INFORMATION

What's Included? Return international flights from London Heathrow (optional), transfers, food, accommodation, course tuition, 24 hour support from our ground manager, and an ACE T-shirt.

What's not included? Travel insurance, spending money.

When can I join?

2011 start dates are:

- 12th April
- 17th August
- 27th September

2012 Start Dates

- 10th April
- 15th August
- 25th September

How can I join? You can apply online at www.conservationafrica.net/apply or simply fill out an application form in one of our brochures and post it back to us.

