



ZINGELA PREDATOR CONSERVATION PROJECT CLOSE UP

At Zingela you can study some of Africa's most elusive and persecuted predators, focussing on cheetah conservation, leopard and brown hyena studies.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

How does this project make a difference?

The project coordinator, Anthony Peniston, is an inspiration to any budding conservationist. After selling his house in England he worked in Dubai for two years to save up enough money to come to South Africa and pay for a huge electric fence to be put up covering an area of 8,500 hectares. The reason? To put a stop to the 100+ cheetah which are shot each year in Alldays, an area dominated by farming and hunting. The fence prevents the cheetah from hunting on the surrounding game farms where the farm owners would shoot them on sight, but the reserve is big enough for the cheetah to live and hunt naturally. With Anthony managing the land for the farm owner and looking after his stock, he is able to collect the data he needs to demonstrate that the predators have a positive impact on the land and are of vital importance to the ecosystem. By doing this with the help and financial support from volunteers, the vision is that more farmers will take this approach, keeping leopards and cheetahs on their land in a separate area where they can make revenue from ecotourism where tourists can visit and learn about these amazing creatures.

How do I, the volunteer, make a difference?

This project is completely dependent on funds from volunteers - without your efforts the project would not be able to run financially. You will also lend practical support to the project, helping with reserve patrols and observational studies.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- **Cheetah research:** The Limpopo area has the highest number of wild roaming cheetah. There is a good population of cheetahs on the project farm land, and one of these has been fitted with a radio collar to enable her movements and behaviour to be studied more closely. Volunteers work with telemetry equipment to locate the cheetah and use bush-skills to track her on foot, observing her behaviour and recording details to research sheets.
- **Leopard and hyena research:** Zingela is also home to a number of leopards, and sightings and tracks are being used to develop an understanding of the number of animals, their territory size, and their impact on the prey species on the reserve. One leopard has been fitted with a radio collar to enable his movements and behaviour to be studied more closely. Volunteers work with telemetry equipment to locate the leopard by vehicle. The incredibly elusive brown hyena can also be found at Zingela, and sightings and tracks are also being used to research this little-known predator.





- **Prey species:** Zingela has a wealth of animals, and research on prey animals is also needed to help develop a full understanding of the predator-prey interactions.
- **Buffalo** on the reserve have also been collared to help try and develop an understanding of their behaviour and movements around the reserve.
- **Reserve management:** The Zingela project operates on a large 8,500 hectare farm, and volunteers are required to help in the management of the roan and sable antelope breeding station which occupies 1,500 hectares of the total land space.
- **Predator monitoring:** Young antelope are very vulnerable in the bush and the bomas require management to ensure predation levels from cheetah and hyena are minimal.
- **Fence line patrols of inner sable and roan camps and the greater reserve:** This work includes regular fence patrols and repairs which are carried out for half a day three times a week. Volunteers are also required for putting out feed for animals during the dry season and other general maintenance.

SKILLS GAINED

Tracking (including telemetry equipment), animal identification and behaviour, electric fence maintenance, farm management

WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

The reserve is home to leopard, cheetah, brown hyena, roan and sable antelope, tseebie, zebra, jackal, pocupine, giraffe, impala, steinbok, duiker, gemsbok, wildebeest, warthog, bushbaby, kudu, waterbuck, endangered white faced ducks, black chested snake eagle and more.

LOCATION

The project is situated on an 8,500 hectare farm near Alldays, in the Limpopo Province of South Africa.

FACILITIES

Accommodation: Rustic bush camp with accommodation in twin share tents. There is no electricity at camp but showers are heated with gas

Meal arrangements: Catered, with some help and participation from volunteers

Nearest Town: Alldays, South Africa





Working hours: Variable and weather dependent. Volunteers work a day on Saturdays followed by an evening braai (BBQ). Sundays are a day of rest. For students volunteering for four weeks or longer there is the opportunity to visit Kruger National Park.

Contact with home: Your mobile will work, albeit intermittently. South Africa time = GMT+2 hrs. You will have access to pay phones and internet cafés during town trips on days off.

Transfers: Transfers to the Zingela Predator Conservation Project are done by road. The drive from Johannesburg airport takes approximately 7 hours, broken up with a lunch stop.

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 available in camp and on horse trails.

Medical: Doctors in Alldays. There is a hospital in the nearby provincial capital Polokwane.

Project Insurance: Students will be required to sign an Indemnity form.

IS THIS PROJECT RIGHT FOR ME?

Zingela is a great project for anyone with a keen interest in predators and reserve management. This is not a physically strenuous project but the cheetah tracking requires you to be able to hike on foot for a couple of hours at a time.

The camp is atmospheric but the facilities are somewhat basic - if you want to learn about wildlife, feel comfortable with the thought of camping in the field and are looking for an opportunity to immerse yourself in nature, then the Zingela project will be a great choice for you.

BOOKING INFORMATION

What's Included? Return international flights from London Heathrow (optional), transfers from Johannesburg airport, food, accommodation, 24 hour support from our ground manager, ACE T-Shirt, financial contributions to the project

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

When can I join? This projects runs all year round except over Christmas.

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.

