

BIG 5 EXPERIENCE PROGRAM DATES

06 June to 22 June / 18 July to 03 August / 08 August to 24 August

PROGRAM COSTS

\$ 3 650 - US Dollar / **€ 3 250** - Euro

Please note: we use the US Dollar as our base currency, as such the EUR price may change at anytime due to exchange rate fluctuations.

Only 8 spaces are available in each group, to give you the best experience possible! We work on a first come first served basis, so book early to avoid disappointment!

PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

ABOUT THE BIG 5 EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The **Discover Eden Big 5 Experience Program** is specifically designed for ecology and conservation students who want to get to grips with large mammal conservation and reserve management in Africa. Positioned in two of the top southern African destinations for conservation, with a focus on large mammals and predators, this course gets you up close and personal with some of the deadliest animals on the planet.

Our students get to interact with some of the **top Big 5 professionals** in South Africa, learning in a hands-on program that goes way beyond the tourist experience. The itinerary is multi-faceted to get you exposed to a range of skills that are essential tools for the modern-day conservationist. The course includes topics such as **animal rehabilitation, animal capture, reserve management, ecology, ornithology, herpetology** and more.

Food, accommodation and ground transport are all included in this package.

Please note: Due to the unpredictability of nature and the weather, the days and activities stated below may be switched around or substituted to give you the best experience possible.

COURSE OUTLINE

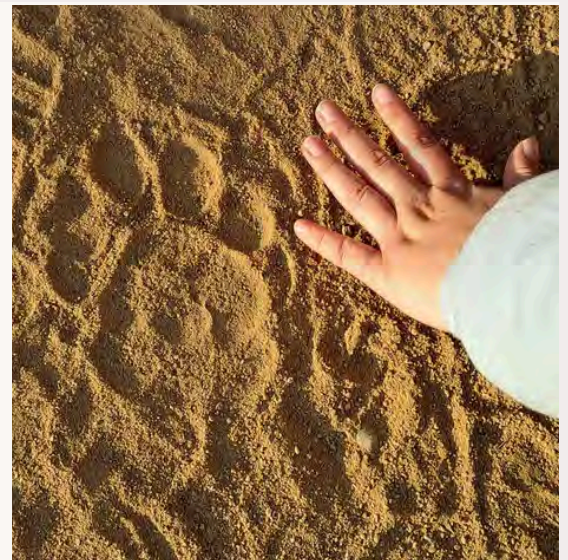
DAY 1 ARRIVE & DRIVE TO BABANAGO

Your friendly Discover Eden Guide will pick you up at **OR Tambo International Airport** in Gauteng Province. You will then make our journey to Babanago Nature Reserve where you will spend the first week of your program. Enjoy your first African **game drive** and have the chance to get to know your guide and fellow students.



DAY 2 TRACKS, CAMERA TRAPS & GAME COUNT

Today is an outing into the field that will have you learning about **spoor identification**, behaviour, tracking, dung middens, feeding habits and home ranges of large mammals. You will set up **camera traps** around the reserve to observe animals remotely and perhaps catch footage of the more elusive species. End the day assisting with a **vehicle-based game count**.



DAY 3 TELEMETRY, DATA ANALYSIS & NOCTURNAL MONITORING DRIVE

In the morning you will get to grips with how to use **telemetry** to track animals and what makes this a valuable research tool. Once you know the basics you will head out to track **collared animals** to test your ability. After lunch head out to collect the camera traps you set out the day before and analyse the data. Cap off a busy day with a **night drive to monitor nocturnal animals**.



DAY 4 BUSH WALK, LECTURE & EROSION CONTROL

Head out in the morning with trained ecologists for a **bush walk** in the **Zululand bushveld** and discover the finer details about veld management. The reserve ecologists will give you a lecture after which you will discuss **conservation management**. In the afternoon you will about **soil erosion** and its impact and assist with control measures on the reserve to address it.



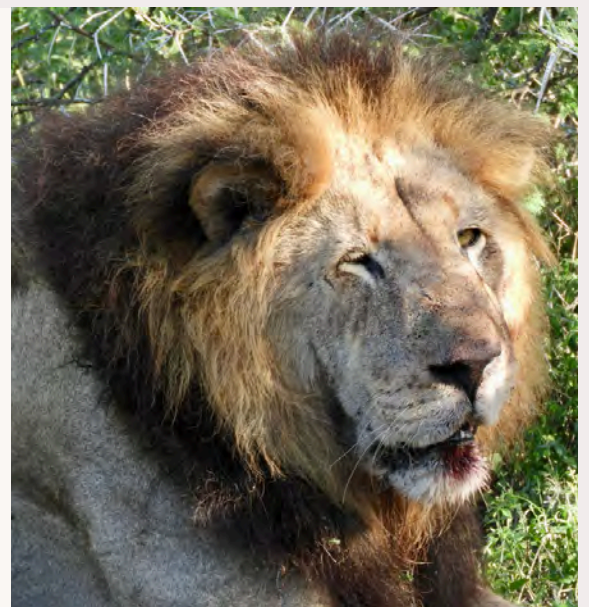
DAY 5 BIRDS, BIRD ATLASING & ALIEN PLANT REMOVAL

A potentially early start to the day will have you delving into the world of birds, learning about them and how we study them. This could include a **bird ringing** (banding) session, tips on identifying and some atlasing. In the afternoon learn about the ecological impacts caused by rampant **alien plants** and assist with their removal in **key biodiversity areas**.



DAY 6 LARGE MAMMAL CONSERVATION

Today you will get the chance to gain perspectives on **large mammal conservation**, spending time in the field with reserve ecologists and researchers. Help contribute to Citizen Science projects while learning about a career in **wildlife management**. During the course of the day you will join the reserve team for a **practical session** that makes a difference to the reserve.



DAY 7 CONSERVATION INTERVENTION DAY

Today is a special day! You have the opportunity to participate in an **active conservation intervention**. This could take the form of **collaring** one of the cats, **assisting with a rhino capture** or an **animal translocation**. You will finish your last day at Babanago with a final game drive before heading to your next destination.



DAY 8 DRIVE TO KRUGER

In the morning you depart for the world-famous **Kruger National Park**! During the journey between two provinces keep an eye on how the **habitat changes**. The trip will take you through several towns and rural areas, giving you a glimpse into **life in South Africa**.



DAY 9 TO 10 THE KRUGER EXPERIENCE

Spend time interacting with top ecology and veterinary staff who live and work in this iconic game park. Learn, ask and absorb. Learn about the interactions of people and animals. **What are the issues facing the park? What threatens this conservation haven? Game drives** will help us see if we can complete the Big 5 for your list!



DAY 11 DRIVE TO HOEDSPRUIT & CHOPPER EXERCISE

Travel to Hoedspruit today, known as one of the wildlife **conservation** capitals of the world. Do you have what it takes to dart from the sky? Test your skills - participate in a **darting exercise** from the chopper!



DAY 12 ANIMAL REHABILITATION

Today is an exciting day. Work alongside the team from a large **animal rehabilitation centre**, learning about the challenges and costs involved in getting animals back into the wild. Get behind the scenes, including the **clinic work**, **quarantine facilities** and how to take care of baby animals coming into rehab. In the afternoon, visit the local **vulture restaurant** to see if you can identify ex-rehab birds by their patagial tags or rings



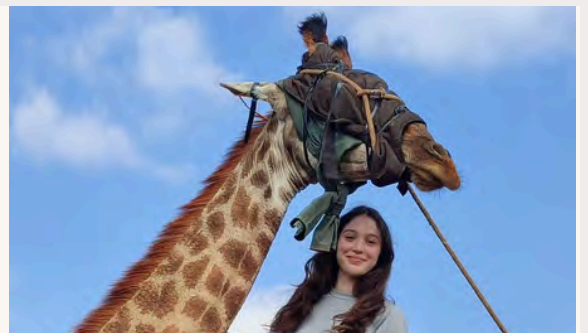
DAY 13 CONSERVATION NPO DAY

An impactful morning learning about how dogs are used in **anti-poaching efforts** to conserve Africa's wildlife. Learn how the dogs are trained and deployed into key conservation areas. Spend the afternoon learning from a local NPO about how **collected snares** are turned into amazing jewellery to raise funds for **conservation**.



DAY 14 GAME CAPTURE

Learn about how conservation has changed in the last few decades. The focal point here is learning about **game capture techniques** including chemical immobilization, mass capture and more.



DAY 15 REPTILE HUSBANDRY

Spend the day completing a **reptile husbandry course** - learning how to handle, identify and work with reptiles. Learn about habitat use, **animal handling**, **husbandry**, **reptile physiology**, enclosure design and enrichment and more.



DAY 16 DRIVE TO JOHANNESBURG

Sadly it's time to move on! Sit back and enjoy the scenic drive to Johannesburg, where you will be spending one more exciting day of conservation. We spend our **last night together** at a quiet guest house near the airport.



DAY 16 WILDLIFE HOSPITAL TOUR & DEPARTURE

Our last visit is to a dedicated wildlife hospital at the forefront of animal rehabilitation and illegal trade work in the country. Tour the **animal hospital** and see the patients in their care. After lunch, we will take you to OR Tambo International Airport (Johannesburg Airport), where you will make your way back home. We are sure this experience will benefit you throughout your career and will never be forgotten.

