

BIG 5 EXPERIENCE COURSE INFORMATION

ABOUT THE BIG 5 EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Discover Eden is an organisation which oversees meaningful educational tours in South Africa and provides an all-inclusive package for students. Food, accommodation and ground transport are all included in our packages.

Discover Eden was co-founded by Elton du Plooy and Dr Mark Brown to provide young conservation students with the opportunity to experience what a **career in conservation** can be like in a practical, hands-on way. Drawing on their extensive experience of doing ecological research and applied conservation work in southern Africa for several decades, Discover Eden has carefully developed courses that maximise opportunities for students to gain meaningful insight into conservation work in Africa. All of the activities we offer are included in the cost to help make it easy to budget for the trip with no unexpected costs.

Discover Eden will accompany you from airport pick-up to drop-off, offering guidance and support throughout your experience, making it as meaningful and rewarding as possible. Our personal service, the quality of the activities, the excellent accommodation we offer and the well-managed, meaningful structure of our programs will make this an experience you will never forget.

The Discover Eden Big 5 Experience program is specifically designed for those who are either studying or working in the **ecological sciences, including zoology, botany, environmental science, animal science, or biological sciences**.

The program length is **17 days** and takes you out into the field to learn hands-on from some of the top conservation professionals in South Africa. Learn while having a great time touring our country.

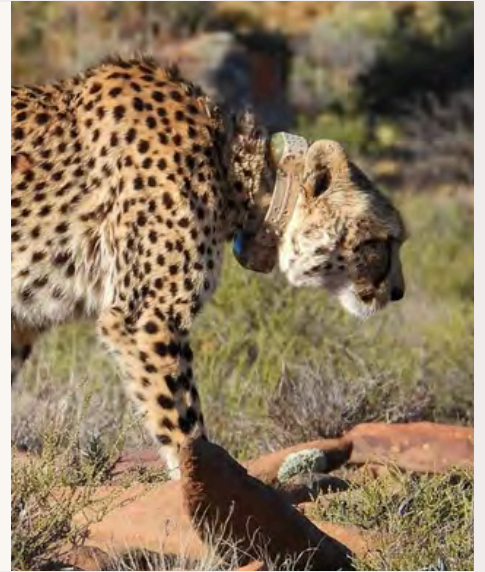
Please see the **itinerary document** for a breakdown of the trip. Please note due to the unpredictability of nature, the weather and the availability of the scientists, this itinerary may change without prior notice.

THE PROGRAM INCLUDES

GAME RESERVE MANAGEMENT & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

You could take part in tasks such as:

- Visual monitoring, telemetry and research and tracking of animals.
- Monitoring of elusive species with camera traps.
- Bird identification and monitoring, including bird ringing (banding).
- Monitoring of animal behaviour.
- Habitat and vegetation identification.
- Erosion control and invasive plant removal.



ORNITHOLOGY

- Visit a raptor project. Learn about the anatomy, behaviour and the research and conservation work the team is involved with.
- Take part in a bird ringing (banding) exercise hosted by a professional bird ringer



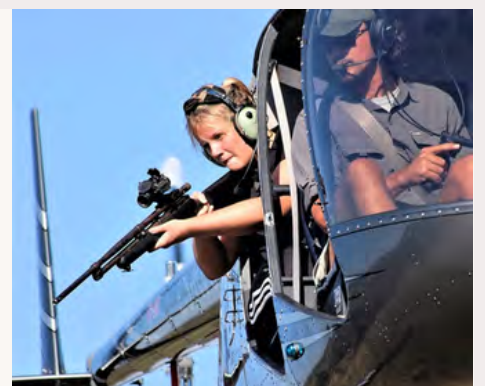
BOTANY

- Learn about natural vegetation and the management of it on a game reserve.
- Understand the threat of alien invader plants and why it is so important to monitor and control them. Assist in eradicating some aliens on the reserve.



GAME CAPTURE TECHNIQUES

- Learn about various game capture techniques including chemical immobilization, mass capture, aerial darting from a helicopter (chopper) and more.
- Practice darting from a chopper to see if you have what it takes to dart wildlife!



ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

- Get to grips with the poaching threat to our wildlife.
- Meet the dogs trained to act against poaching in protected areas



HERPETOLOGY

- Get to grips with the snake and other reptile species found in our region and learn about their biology and how to safely handle and work with these special reptiles. Complete a snake handling course and receive certification.



ANIMAL REHABILITATION

- Visit a top animal rehabilitation centre and a world-renowned wildlife hospital.
- Learn about the challenges and cost involved in getting injured, sick or orphaned animals back into the wild.
- Behind the scenes tour of the rearing unit, clinic and quarantine facilities.



ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR

- Learn about the ways animals interact with each other and their environment, and how our lives as humans can affect their ecology and behaviour.



ECOLOGY, BIODIVERSITY & SUSTAINABILITY

- These topics will be addressed throughout the entire program. At each activity, our guide will ensure you get the context of how to live more sustainably within our environments



THE MANAGEMENT OF ENDANGERED SPECIES

- This topic will be addressed on many different occasions throughout the program by scientists and rangers in charge of their conservation.
- Participate in large mammal research and conservation interventions, e.g. collaring or rhino dehorning.



WHATS INCLUDED

- Food: 3 meals a day.
- Accommodation.
- All ground transportation.
- All of the activities.
- Lectures and course materials.
- Park entry fees.
- Travel advice prior to departure.
- Transfers from and to OR Tambo International Airport (on set arrival and departure days only).
- Orientation on arrival.
- Tea, coffee, juice and bottled water (where necessary).
- Support and assistance throughout your stay, 24/7.
- A certificate upon completion.

WHATS EXCLUDED

- Visa costs (if needed).
- Flight tickets.
- Medical and Travel Insurance.

HEALTH & SAFETY

- Discover Eden will have a guide with you from airport pick up to drop off.
- All travelling is done by the coordinators/guides.
- You will be required to sign an indemnity form on arrival.
- Hospitals and doctors are located in the nearest towns.
- Malaria: the tour takes place in a moderate-risk malaria region. Taking place in winter, there are not many mosquitoes around, so the risk is reduced. Feel free to consult your healthcare professional if you want to take precautions. The South African government recommends antimalarial drugs on from September to May.
- You should consult your doctor for advice on vaccinations you might need before travelling to South Africa.

OTHER

Washing machine:

- A washing machine is available at certain areas during your trip at your own cost (approximately R100 per wash). Washing powder will be supplied per wash). Washing powder will be supplied.

Wi-Fi:

- Wi-Fi availability will be limited. It is recommended that you purchase your own local eSim or sim card at OR Tambo International airport if you require constant internet access.

Weather:

- It can get cold in winter so you need to bring some warm clothes with you. In the mornings and at night it can be very cold, below 5° Celsius (41° Fahrenheit) During the day the temperature is mostly mild to warm at 18 - 26 ° Celsius (64 - 78° Fahrenheit).

ITEMS TO BRING ALONG

- Mosquito repellent.
- Light cotton clothing.
- Warm clothing for cold evenings and mornings.
- Preferably some old clothing that can get ruined.
- Hat/cap.
- Sunscreen - SPF 30 and higher a good choice.
- Swimming costume.
- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Hiking boots - high side that cover ankles best choice.
- A few pairs of old long trousers (or leggings) for walking in the bushveld.
- Waterproof jacket.
- A small backpack.
- Any special medication.
- Swimming towel.
- A refillable water bottle.

CURRENCY

ZAR (South African Rand) are used. If you need to exchange your currency to Rands, please do that at Cape Town International Airport as this is the only place you will be able to do it.

If you are going to also use your bank card while you are here, please remember to let your bank know that you will be using your card out of the country.

NON-ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- Camera.
- Binoculars.
- Sunglasses.
- Spending money to buy gifts for friends, luxury items (chocolates, drinks), washing your clothes etc.

REQUIREMENTS

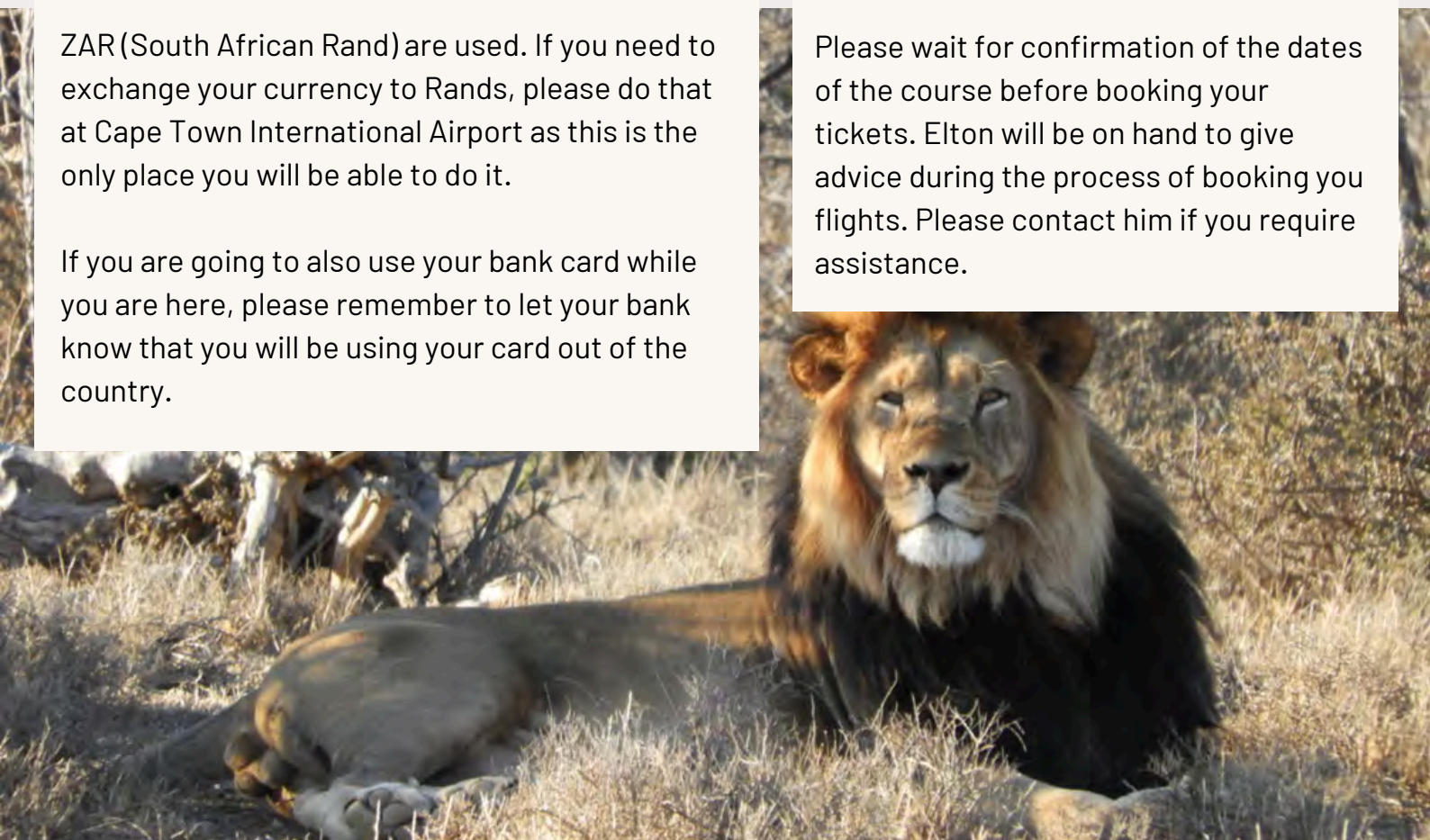
- Full travel and medical insurance.
- Basic English.
- Good fitness levels.

CUISINE

All dietary needs need to be communicated with us well in advance to ensure we can cater for them.

FLIGHTS

Please wait for confirmation of the dates of the course before booking your tickets. Elton will be on hand to give advice during the process of booking your flights. Please contact him if you require assistance.



HOW TO APPLY

Complete the application form or contact the coordinator directly if you require any more information.

PROGRAM COSTS

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

BOOK NOW

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.

Elton du Plooy

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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!

PAYMENT

A 25% booking deposit is required to secure a place in the group.
Full payment needs to be made 2 months before arrival

Bank details are on the invoice that gets sent through after the applicant details form is submitted and a space confirmed.

