



## THE GAME RESERVES

### MAKULEKE

#### The Concession

Situated between the Limpopo and the Luvuvhu Rivers in the northern sector of Kruger National Park is the Pafuri region, an area spanning 24,000 hectares (59305 acres). Within the Pafuri area is the Makuleke Concession, the ancestral home of the Makuleke people and the most diverse and scenically attractive area in all of Kruger National Park.

The Makuleke concession is not accessible to the ordinary tourist visiting the park. This area belongs to the Makuleke community. This is quite a historical event for South Africa as the Makuleke people were removed from this area in 1968 and after a lengthy process it was finally re-instated to the community in 1998 after a very long struggle. This area is certainly the wildest and most remote part of the Kruger National Park and offers varied vegetation, great wildlife viewing, the best birding in all of the Kruger National Park and is filled with folklore of the early explorers and ancient civilizations.

#### The camp

EcoTraining's Kruger National Park Camp is situated in the Makuleke concession. The camp is situated between the Limpopo and Luvuvhu Rivers. This is a true wilderness area, steeped in history and situated in the remotest part of Kruger in one of the most biologically diverse areas. Scenery ranges from the beautiful, quietly-flowing Luvuvhu River shaded by Nyala trees and fever tree forests and teeming with hippos and crocodiles; to the awesome Lanner Gorge, palm-fringed wetlands and rocky outcrops with thousand-year-old baobab trees. We employ members of the Makuleke community at our camp and there is a lot of history in the area that is exciting to learn about.

#### Temperatures at the camp

In the Kruger National Park you'll find a subtropical climate, with hot summers (average 40°C 104 F) and warm, dry winters (average minimum 9.3°C and average maximum 26.3°C). However, be sure not to be caught out by the intermittent summer rains which fall between October and March. Early mornings and late afternoon/evenings during the winter do get very cold, so be sure to bring sufficient warm clothing.

#### Animals found in the Makuleke Concession (Kruger Park)

All the wildlife that one would expect to see in a great national park such as Kruger can potentially be encountered on the concession: plains game such as zebra, kudu and impala, lions and leopards are a special sighting, herds of elephant, a few rhinoceros, African buffalo, nyala antelope in abundance and also seldom-seen animals such as eland and bushpig.

There is abundant birdlife. This part of Kruger is known to be one of the best birding areas in the park and is home to rarely-seen species such as Pel's Fishing Owl, Wattle-eyed Flycatcher and Grey-headed Parrot.

### **Accommodation**

20 Students are accommodated in 10 comfortable thatched, tented rooms placed on wooden decks in the shade of large nyala trees. Each room has an en-suite bathroom consisting of a shower and washbasin with hot running water and a flush toilet and also has a veranda overlooking the surrounding bush. The camp itself is not fenced which means that animals do move through the camp from time to time.

### **The central communal area**

This area consists of a thatch-roofed open sided deck where all meals, lectures and studying takes place. A clearing for evening camp fires creates an idyllic setting for social and leisure time.

## **SELATI GAME RESERVE**

Our Selati Camp is situated on the banks of the Selati River in the 33 000 hectare (81545 acres) Selati Game Reserve to the west of the Kruger National Park.

Selati Game Reserve is a large undeveloped reserve with diverse topography and biodiversity. We are very fortunate to traverse over this vast area of wilderness during our courses. In the east there are large granite koppies (hills), where Black eagles and Klipspringers can be found. The dominant vegetation types are Combretum and Mopane woodland. This habitat is well suited to the large elephant and giraffe population found there. The reserve is dissected by the Selati River which dries up in winter into large rocky pools of water. These pools are good places to view concentrations of birds and animals such as Nyala and Rhino. There is a lot of space to conduct walks and get a true sense of wilderness. Special species occurring here include Sable Antelope and Eland. We are also able to visit the Sable breeding programme run by the management of the reserve.

### **Temperatures at the camp**

Summer temperatures average from about 35-37°C (97°F) during the day, dropping to mid 20°C (68°F) at night. Winter temperatures drops to about 4°C at night (our lowest was 1.5°C (34.7°F) in 2006 last year) here and averages between 18 -25°C (64 - 77°F) during the day. Occasional winter showers prevail, but are unusual. Rain in the summer takes the form of heavy thunder-showers, or frontal rainfall over a longer period of time.

### **Animals found in the Selati Game Reserve**

A wide range of animals lives here, including lions, elephants, rhinoceros and leopard. Plains game such as eland, sable antelope, giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, waterbuck, kudu, impala, baboons and monkeys can also be seen. Selati is a good place for viewing lion, white rhino and elephant. General game is plentiful and you might even get to see the large herd of eland, as well as the rare sable antelope.

### **Accommodation**

The camp consists of 10 simple dome tents, each with 2 mattresses (2 learners per tent). There are shared bathroom facilities and a central communal area overlooking the Selati River. Learners bring their own bedding.

### **The central communal area**

This area consists of a thatch-roofed open sided deck where all meals, lectures and studying takes place. A clearing for evening camp fires creates an idyllic setting for social and leisure time.

## KARONGWE GAME RESERVE

Karongwe Camp is on the banks of the Karongwe River (mostly a dry river bed) in the 9 000 hectare (22 239 acre) Karongwe Game Reserve, which is to the south-west of the Kruger National Park. Through Karongwe Game Reserve flow three rivers which are tributaries of the Olifants River, carving their way through the bedrock and dividing the reserve. The vegetation of the reserve falls within the Savannah Biome of southern Africa with distinct vegetation zones being represented – mixed Lowveld and Mopane bushveld along with grass savannah, riverine vegetation and rocky outcrops.

Karongwe has the following habitats: undulating hills and valleys and broad-leafed woodland. We are allowed traversing over most of the reserve, except for one small section in the northern part of the reserve. This is not a restriction at all as it's quite a small section of the reserve.

### Temperatures at the camp

Our summers are warm to hot, with temperatures ranging from mid 20°C (68°F) on the cooler cloud-covered rainy days, to the high 30°C (86°F) on average days. Occasional hot day's temperatures exceed 40°C (104°F). Winters are usually dry, with the average morning temperature of 6°C (43°F), with occasional cooler morning temperatures, and warmer mornings when there is cloud cover. Afternoon temperatures average in the mid 20s°C (68°F), with ranges of 18°C (65°F) to 32°C (89°F) expected. Occasional winter showers prevail, but are unusual. Rain in the summer takes the form of heavy thunder-showers, or frontal rainfall over a longer period of time.

### Animals found in the Karongwe Game Reserve

Karongwe is a good place for viewing leopard, lion and cheetah as well as elephant and white rhino. As the camp itself is unfenced, we often have four-legged guests in the camp. Hyena makes nightly patrols of the camp and elephant, cheetah and lion have also made appearances in camp on occasion. There is abundant wildlife with over **60 different mammal species** including **lion, leopard, elephant, white rhino and cheetah**.

### Accommodation

The camp consists of 10 walk-in style Meru tents, with twin beds (students share tents), shared ablution facilities and a central communal area. We can accommodate a maximum of 20 students.

There are viewing decks in the central area of the camp, and many students choose to make the viewing decks their "bedroom" for part of or for the full duration of the course. The camp itself is unfenced.

### The central communal area

This area is made up of 4 tall thatch-roofed open-sided decks which forms a square that encloses an open campfire area. One of the deck structures serves as the open air dining area, lecture room and study area. Two decks remain open to welcome the adventurous who want to spend their nights as close to nature as possible, while the last deck is home to Rob, your head instructor.