

# The Training Specialists since 1993



**28 Day  
Field Guiding  
Course in  
Kenya**

# 28 days – Kenya

## Course Location – Rukinga Tsavo

Our signature Field Guide Course consists of 28 adventure packed days living in and learning about nature and ecology from our wilderness camp in Kenya. During your stay with us you will take part in a variety of learning activities whilst driving and walking in some of the most stunning areas of Africa. Driving and walking will comprise the backbone of your training activities but any stay in Kenya would not be complete without experiencing the Tsavo Elephants and Lions.

Tsavo is famous worldwide for the “man eating and mane less” lions and Kenya for the Massai Mara and so it should be, as there are few other places able to offer such wildlife intensity. Many people who have been to Africa numerous times come to the Kenya for its wildlife

The Tsavo ecosystem is an area of 43,000 km<sup>2</sup> and is one of the largest and most important wildlife refuges in Africa. The core of this area is formed by Tsavo East and West National Parks, which together occupy approximately 21,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and the Mkomazi Game Reserve which occupies about 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> in Tanzania. The vast area adjoining the southern arms of Tsavo East and West comprises privately owned plots of land that are mainly utilised for livestock grazing or limited agriculture. The exception to this is Rukinga Sanctuary, an 80,000 acre area of land that is managed by Wildlife Works for the benefit of wildlife. Camp Tsavo is situated in the centre of Rukinga Sanctuary and is where our camp is based. The camp is set out like a traditional African village and surrounded by endless views of the African Bush

This ecosystem is home to a large diversity of flora and fauna, many species of which are classified by IUCN (the World Conservation Union) as vulnerable, threatened or endangered, and boasts a large population of predators, especially lions. Rukinga Sanctuary forms part of a vital wildlife corridor (Tsavo Kasi-gau Wildlife corridor, TKWD) across the ‘Taru desert’ for a population of almost one thousand elephants and hundreds of buffalo that migrate seasonally between the Parks in search of water, temporarily giving Rukinga one of the largest populations of elephants on private land in Kenya.

The total human population in the area bordering Rukinga is approaching 12,000 individuals of whom the vast majority are subsistence farmers. In the past Camp Tsavo has worked with six villages: Bungule, Jora, Rukanga, Kiteghe, Makwasinyi and Kisimenyii. Sasenyi village also borders the sanctuary and is the closest village to Camp Tsavo, only 13 km away (30 minutes by road through the sanctuary).

Historically this area has been too harsh for people to exploit and so people only started settling here over the last century. Local indigenous people offer a wealth of rich and diverse cultures and traditions. Tribes include the Wakamba, Wataita, Masai, and the Waliangulu.

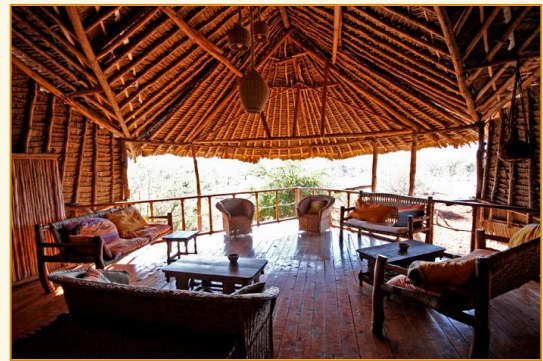


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## Accommodation - Camp Tsavo

Camp Tsavo is a permanent bush camp in the centre of Rukinga Sanctuary and is set out like an African village, the Centre's makuti-thatched 'rondavels' (circular bandas with conical roofs) were built using local techniques, materials and labour. Eight single sex dormitories sleep up to 40 people and large dome tents accommodate a further 40 people during the summer.

All learners will be accommodated in 4 person bandas which are mosquito free and actually very cool. We will also be able to accommodate single sex as we have a considerable amount of beds in camp. Inside each banda there are four pairs of rustic wooden bunk beds. Individual sleeping units consist of a single bed, high-density mattress, sheets, blankets, pillows and sleeping nets as well as shelves to keep your belongings. The camp has an ablution block with showers and flushing toilets. The camp is surrounded by a fence to provide security from wildlife. There is one large mess area as well as a large campfire area where you can relax after a hard day working in the bush.



## Daily Programme

The outings are extremely flexible and determined by the unpredictability of what is found during the outing in combination with the subjects that have to be covered. The outing could be a game drive following up on the roar of a lion heard during the night or walk learning about the plant species occurring in the area. It could be a walk following fresh elephant tracks, learning how to track the animal and finding it or it could be a game drive to a waterhole where animals come to drink. Learners return to camp in the late morning for a hearty brunch which is followed by a lecture on the subject of the day. Study and rest time is then followed by afternoon tea and another outing into the wilderness until sunset, if walking, or until well after dark if doing a game drive.

Afternoon outings could include night drives looking for nocturnal animals such as owls, bush babies and leopards or it could be a walk looking for and learning how to identify interesting birds. It could be time spent studying the night skies. It is then back to the camp for dinner, stories around the campfire, discussing the day's experiences and wondering about tomorrow's adventures.

The emphasis is on practical day-to-day experiences in the bush. The daily outings are flexible and may focus on specific subjects such as animal tracks and tracking, birds, plant identification or animal behaviour, or may involve game viewing and learning about the ecosystem in general.

## Meals

- Wake-up to tea/coffee with biscuits and fresh fruit
- Enjoy a cooked breakfast, with cereals and fruit for brunch
- In the afternoon indulge with a few light snacks
- A balanced, warm plated meal finishes off the day for dinner



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## Course Content

- Welcome and introduction
  - Introduction to guiding in nature
  - Creating a guided nature experience
  - Geology and soils
  - Astronomy
  - Weather and climate
  - Ecology
  - Taxonomy
  - Introduction to the biomes of southern Africa
  - Botany and grasses
  - Vegetation identification
- Additional activities:**
- Basic 4x4 driving skills
  - Involvement in conservation & community projects
  - Day trip to Tsavo East
  - Day trip to Tsavo West
- Arthropods (Insects and relatives)
  - Amphibians
  - Reptiles
  - Fish
  - Birds
  - Mammals
  - Animal behaviour
  - Tracks and tracking
  - Radio procedures
  - Conservation management and historical human habitation
  - Habitat management
  - Bush camps
- Tests, presentations and evaluations:**
- 3 x Written tests
  - 2 x Oral presentations
  - 2 x Practical evaluations:  
Walk evaluation & Game drive evaluation



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## Who can do this course? Anyone!

EcoTraining offers courses which have been designed to supply the South African safari industry with high caliber professional Field Guides. These courses are available to people wishing to enter the industry as field guides, but also for anyone who wants to increase their knowledge of the African bush. EcoTraining is expanding to Australia ([www.ecotrainingaustralia.com.au](http://www.ecotrainingaustralia.com.au)) and has launched this course in Kenya. So whether you've chosen a professional career linked to wildlife or nature or just finished school and are on your gap year, or if you've possibly taken a career break or are a regular traveller to the bush, this course is for you.

With our Field Guide Courses being accredited by FGASA who have THETA accreditation, this means we meet THETA standards. THETA is the Tourism and Hospitality and Sport Education Training Authority of the South African government. These are the two bodies responsible for regulating standards within the guide training industry in southern Africa.

Writing and passing the EcoTraining tests and practical evaluations listed above is sufficient in order to complete the EcoTraining FGASA Level 1 and the EcoTraining Trails Guide FGASA courses and obtain the EcoTraining certificate.

The course is structured to maximize the practical experience of our learners in the bush. Each day allows for hours of time spent in the field interpreting the ecology and enjoying a wildlife experience. Activities alternate between walks and driving. Lecture time follows after brunch, which involves topical instruction (lectures) and discussion on the subject of the day. This is followed by time for self study for the learners. Learner participation in the care of the camp, equipment and vehicle will be expected. Learners will be expected to pay attention to the needs of fellow learners and to work in teams at times.



## Course Rates

Please contact [enquiries@ecotraining.co.za](mailto:enquiries@ecotraining.co.za)

We reserve the right to change rates

### Rate includes:

Instructors and Lectures

Game drives and Walks

Accommodation and Meals

Tea, coffee and cordials

Not included are flights, transfers, visas & personal expenses

✓ Further details on request or registration, contact details on next page or bookings are available on-line at

[www.ecotraining.co.za](http://www.ecotraining.co.za)

"Thank you so much for organizing this, it is a perfect way for city-girls to get to know about nature. Can't wait for another course. [My stay was] Great & unforgettable! Well-organized, motivated people, interesting things to learn, nice introduction to Africa, love it." Caroline Van't Hoff (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

"Learning experience was excellent. Looking forward to another learning experience from you." Steven Mwasi (Kenya)

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## About EcoTraining – Kenya

EcoTraining's mission is to establish professional guide training, to increase the standard of guiding throughout Kenya. We believe one of the key factors in the conservation of wildlife is the responsibility of the guides.

There are more than 6000 safari guides employed in the industry in East Africa responsible for guiding tens of thousands of tourists each year. Based on feedback from tourists, professional safari guides and safari operators, we believe that there is a real need to supply a quality training service to these guides in order to improve their guiding abilities, to make them more responsible and sensitive to their clients' needs and the environment and to give them a sense of pride in what they do. For many of these guides, the tourism industry is the only career option available.

EcoTraining has been conducting guide training programs since 1993 in southern and east Africa and has three established 20-bedded camps situated in wilderness areas of southern Africa. EcoTraining southern Africa is endorsed by the Field Guide's Association of Southern Africa which is accredited by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) under the Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education Authority (THETA). We form the practical component of the extremely comprehensive Damelin Certificate in Nature Guiding, the Intec Correspondence Diploma in Game Ranging and the Wildlife Campus Online Game Ranging course.

EcoTraining aims to ensure that guides in Africa are of the finest standard and training. Critical to us is that the guides acknowledge that as important as wildlife knowledge is, even more key is the right philosophy and approach – to take the countless opportunities given to them each day to impart conservation principles to their guests on safari. Every person that a Field Guide guides can go back to their country and take the conservation message back to positively influence a greater community. EcoTraining realises the potential influence that guides may have on their guests. We are trying to make a difference and want to impact where we can.

EcoTraining East Africa is owned and operated by Ian Johnson, Lex Hes and Anton Lategan. Ian has been training guides in East Africa since 1994. He is a professional guide, photographer and documentary camera man. Lex has been guiding in Africa for 30 years. He is a successful wildlife photographer, author and is one of southern Africa's top professional nature guides. Anton has guided at some of South Africa's premier game lodges and operated and run EcoTraining southern Africa for the past 10 years. We aim to put the bush back into Africa for all those that are searching for the most authentic wildlife training and safari experiences .

**Have we forgotten that wilderness is not a place, but a pattern of soul  
where every tree, every bird and every beast is a soul maker? Ian**

### Contact Details:

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