



EcoTraining
SOUTH AFRICA
Pioneer and Leader in Field Guide and Nature Training

YOUR LIFE ALTERING CAREER CHOICE

EcoTraining

28 Day Course

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THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM NATURE ARE MANY - THE IMPORTANCE OF A BEETLE

Who can do this course? Anyone!

EcoTraining offers the following courses which have been designed to supply the South African safari industry with high caliber professional Field Guides. These courses are not only available to people wishing to enter the industry as field guides, but for anyone who wants to increase their knowledge of the African bush. 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.

This is our well-known comprehensive field training course aimed at those wishing to experience a bush holiday in South Africa, whilst also learning about the environment they are in – it is for those that are passionate about nature, who would like a more in-depth experience and understanding of it. It was developed in 1993 and was the first of its kind in the safari industry.

If you are not aiming for a career as a Field Guide, but would like to learn about it for your own personal growth, the knowledge you gain will stimulate your safari and bush holidays and give them a whole new meaning.

28 days of living and learning in nature at our wilderness camps provides you with the practical and theoretical knowledge of the natural environment. Upon completion of the course, you will be capable of conducting game drives and interpreting the natural environment around you.

Our Field training course consists of walks; one or two-daily lectures in our bush classrooms; game drives, as well as sleep-outs in the bush. Every minute of the day and night on this course is a learning experience, being constantly exposed to the bush. Our highly experienced instructors provide unique access to their vast knowledge and insight, making every lecture an inspiring experience.

Daily Programme

A typical daily programme at the camp follows a routine of **rising early, usually before sunrise**, enjoying hot coffee while you listen to the bush waking up and then leaving the camp for an outing into the wilderness.

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 a 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 or it could be a time for learners to test their 4x4 driving skills.

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

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
- 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

Additional activities:

- Basic 4WD driving skills [not driving lessons, but an opportunity to drive the game viewing vehicle]
- Sleep out in the bush
- Fire Arm theory and practical shooting

Tests, presentations and evaluations:

- 3 x Written tests
- 2 x Oral presentations
- 2 x Practical evaluations:
- Walk evaluation & Game drive evaluation

Course Rates

Please contact enquiries@ecotraining.co.za for further information.

Rate includes:

- Qualified & Experienced Instructors
- Lectures
- Game drives
- Walks
- Accommodation
- Meals
- Tea, coffee and cordials
- Further details on request or registration

