

**totally
travel**

volunteer. travel. experience.

info@totallytravel.com.au | 03 8743 1215

Big 5 Research Safari, South Africa

"My trip was amazing, I had so much fun and I have only positives to say. It was amazing to see so many beautiful animals every day in a stunning reserve, whilst being involved in wildlife monitoring, data collection and conservation work. Thank you again for making my dream come true!" Emily

This program is a dream come true for anyone with a love of remote wilderness and a passion for African wildlife. The exciting and important research project takes place in a spectacularly beautiful, private reserve wilderness on the edge of a National Park, home to lion, rhino, elephant, leopard, cheetah, African wild dog, buffalo and plentiful game species including wildebeest, zebra and numerous antelope, all living in their natural habitat on thousands of hectares of pristine African bush.

Volunteers play a central role in every part of the research including daily monitoring expeditions, tracking wildlife on foot and by vehicle, camera trap placement, photo analysis and even using drone technology. You'll receive expert training on arrival and will then head out twice a day to recording animal behaviour. As a member of this pioneering research team, you will learn new skills such as navigation techniques and identification of flora and fauna. You may even have the chance to participate in darting and re-collaring if necessary.



Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available

totally
travel

volunteer. travel. experience.

info@totallytravel.com.au | 03 8743 1215

Trip Highlights:

- True African safari experience, tracking and viewing animals in the wild
- Getting up close to Africa's amazing wildlife in an active research capacity
- Remote and beautiful National Park setting
- Ranger-escorted bush walks and night drives
- Opportunities for exciting sleep-outs under the stars
- Regular presentations / lectures from professional rangers

Snapshot

- **Start Dates :** Tuesdays year round
- **Duration :** From 2-12 weeks
- **Pricing:**
 - 2 weeks AU\$2,195 / NZ\$2,635 / £1,269
 - 3 weeks AU\$2,895 / NZ\$3,475 / £1,669
 - 4 weeks AU\$3,595 / NZ\$4,315 / £2,069
 - 6 weeks AU\$5,095 / NZ\$6,115 / £2,899
- **Minimum Age :** 18
- **Fly In/Out :** Johannesburg (JNB)
- **Activities:** Tracking and monitoring of wildlife, recording their feeding behaviour, territorial movements and social patterns. General reserve management activities
- **What's included:** All meals, accommodation, airport meet-and-greet, orientation briefing, local 24/7 support
- **What's not included in cost:** Flights, transfers to and from reserve (budget \$300)
- **Accommodation:** Multi-share bunk rooms with shared bathrooms. Private double-room upgrade is available on request.
- **Food:** All meals self-catering on a rostered basis – food ingredients all provided

Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available



**totally
travel**

volunteer. travel. experience.

info@totallytravel.com.au | 03 8743 1215

Itinerary

Day 1 (Tuesday) Arrive at Johannesburg Airport (JNB) before 11am. If you prefer to fly in a day early we can book you a night at a great little lodge near the airport with free transfers.

Around 11am you'll be met by the program coordinators and any others starting the same day, and together you'll take a private transfer to the reserve, a journey of a little over 3 hours. The transfers are payable locally. On the way we stop off for any last minute essentials (soft drinks, toiletries, snacks etc). Once at the research base the team will be there to settle you in to your new home and it will be an easy afternoon relaxing in the fantastic setting, meeting the group getting to know how everything works.

Project life The first morning will start with an induction talk in which the team will explain everything about the project, the reserve and safety rules. The experienced reserve managers and conservationists have years of field experience which they are only too happy to share with their eager, passionate team of volunteers.

Your hours will vary depending on the activity, but as wild animals are most active in the early morning you'll usually be up before dawn too ! This is the most beautiful time of day in the African bush so, after a quick coffee, heading off in the 4x4 game vehicle is an absolute pleasure. Your vehicle is equipped with all the gear you need for expert tracking: GPS, data recording equipment, spotlight and very importantly, coffee, tea and snacks. The expert researchers and rangers you'll be working with will gladly share their vast store of knowledge about the fauna and flora of the bush, and as well as the vast array of mammals you'll be amazed by the incredible bird life out in the bush.

Like the animals, you'll probably find yourself taking cover during the heat of the day before, typically you join a second research drive in the evening. Some or all of the Big 5 will be monitored every day and you may get involved with additional research, day or night, as necessary. You may also head out by quad bike with one of the guides for a day, as part of the black rhino monitoring program – a really exciting opportunity !

The volunteer team also help out with basic maintenance of the accommodation facilities, and on a roster you'll cook a yummy meal for the group. You'll make lifelong friendships, contribute to conservation and have an unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime experience in the African bush.

Sunday is the day off (no activities organised). If you'd like to arrange an excursion to tour the area and further afield, the project staff will be happy to assist you with this. Excursions will be organised according to the weekly planning by the project manager.

Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available

**totally
travel**

volunteer. travel. experience.

info@totallytravel.com.au | 03 8743 1215

Your Last Day (Tuesday) At the end of your stay you will catch the private transfer back to Johannesburg OR Tambo Airport (payable locally). You may be travelling elsewhere in Africa or you may be heading home - if you're flying out from Johannesburg, unless you can get a late night flight we advise spending the night near the airport (we can book for you) and flying out on the Wednesday.

Accommodation

You will stay in a comfortable farmhouse with magnificent views of the hills and plains. Sleeping is in single-sex bunk-rooms (a couple's room with double bed is available on request). With the sounds of night time wildlife as your lullaby, it is not uncommon to get woken at dawn by a lion's roar! Basic bedding is provided but please bring your sleeping bag for occasional sleep-outs. The shared bathroom facilities have hot showers and flush toilets.

There is a safe to store your valuables, and the farmhouse is solar powered so no problem to charge your phone, camera and tablet. You can get your laundry done for a small charge and you'll be expected to complete house cleaning duties on a roster.

Base camp is often visited by curious wildlife and it is not uncommon to see and hear elephants, lions, hyenas, honey badgers and porcupines from the farmhouse.

Meals Food is provided and you and other volunteers will take turns to prepare meals for the group. You can do grocery shopping with the staff when they go into town to replenish stocks.



Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available

**totally
travel**

volunteer. travel. experience.

info@totallytravel.com.au | 03 8743 1215

Other information:

This is not a malaria area - we recommend packing insect repellent of course and a mosquito net is also recommended to ensure a peaceful sleep, especially during summer.

Don't forget your sleeping bag, roll-mat, binoculars, torch and plenty of batteries (or a rechargeable camping light) - also bring your camera, music and some books to read while relaxing in the evenings.

Mornings and evenings can be chilly even in the summer months so be sure to bring some warm clothes with you. Clothing should be hard-wearing and comfortable – no bright colours, your clothes and shoes should ideally be beige, brown and khaki green so you will blend easily into the bush

Most amenities are available in town, including a supermarket, internet café, and public telephones.



Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available