



## Volunteer Conservation Experience

The Shamwari Conservation Experience (SCE) is a once in a lifetime chance to get behind-the-scenes work experience and be involved with the conservation efforts of the world-renowned Shamwari Private Game Reserve for volunteers, gap-year students, adult sabbatical and adventure seeking travellers.

This is a call to action for your support and assistance, without which our achievements past, present and for the future, would simply not be sustainable or viable. Shamwari is the pioneer and leader in demonstrating how the conservation of wildlife, fauna and flora can be achieved through Eco Tourism.

Shamwari Private Game Reserve, best known as a luxury safari destination, is a fully operational 25 000 hectare free roaming Big Five game reserve. As an SCE participant you will be exposed to various short and long-term conservation projects and assisting the award-winning Shamwari Wildlife and Conservation Department.

The experience is thus a true reflection of the day-to-day operational requirements needed to manage the game reserve and its vast resources. It also includes environmental education and social upliftment projects with largely impoverished local communities, which are an important part of our social responsibility drive to improve the lives of those living in and around the reserve.

Our passionate and dedicated team looks forward to hosting you and showcasing all that Shamwari Private Game Reserve and its abundant natural resources have to offer.

### Why Choose Shamwari Conservation Experience (SCE)

Tasks may vary from physical work to interesting and interactive lecture-based content. There are several monitoring projects which assist in capturing vital information used in the research and management of all species on the reserve. The experience is diverse and structured, yet not pre-scheduled, due to the nature of working in and around wildlife and a reliance on prevailing conditions. Participants will be introduced to the Shamwari Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre (WRC), Vulpro@Shamwari and Born Free Big Cat Sanctuary and Educational Centres and educated about these initiatives and what they are attempting to achieve.

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A minimum stay of two consecutive weeks, with start dates always on a Monday. Operations run from approximately 8am to 5pm daily. Evenings are at leisure, with any need for early morning or late-night activities dependent on the tasks at hand. Our conservation work generally runs in-week from Monday to Friday or as is required by the operations of the reserves' conservation efforts, therefore participants may be asked to assist and conduct related weekend activities from time to time.

Weekends are at leisure with a host of extra-mural activities and adventure activities available. We can advise and supply information on locally registered adventure and leisure operators, who can offer you a host of great off-site extra mural activities. These range from cultural tours to adventures activities which include canoeing, quad biking and horse riding on the beach, to the likes of inter-tidal coastal and marine tours. These off-site activities are undertaken on an elective basis and at an additional cost to the client.

Should our guests not elect to travel off site, they are welcome to enjoy the peace and tranquility that living on a game reserve has to offer such as afternoon game drive and sundowner stop, guided bushwalk, both are bookable directly at the lodge during stay subject to availability and weather. We even offer spa treatments from a therapist we have trained as part of our community enrichment programmes!

### **Long Term Projects and Possible Activities**

Listed are a few of the general activities and tasks which may be undertaken during the minimum of the two week experience.

#### **Game Monitoring: Rhino, Elephants, Predators**

With regular monitoring, it is possible to identify individuals, compile information about the family structure and determine feeding and spatial ecology. Data collected is used to assist in the managing decisions for the reserve.

#### **Camera Trapping and Telemetry Tracking**

The setting and use of camera traps to monitor wildlife activity is a vital tool in gaining visual footage required to manage the reserve. Monitoring of some of the more high-profile wildlife, like cheetah and leopard, are required using telemetry tracking equipment. This is largely as result of the neighbouring properties carrying livestock and also the elusive nature of some of the species.

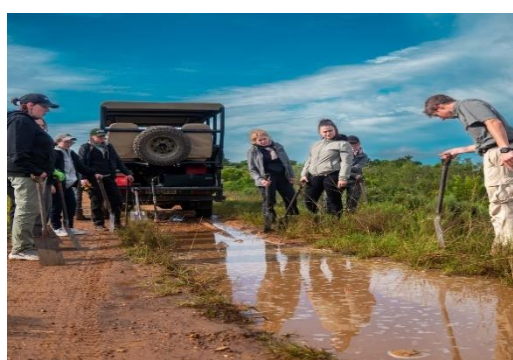
#### **Restoration & Rehabilitation of Reserve Landscapes**

The need to return the once pristine landscape to its original splendour includes the collecting and removal of old fence lines and erosion control.

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### Community Projects and Engagement

The role of conservation does not stop at conserving nature alone, but also includes a responsibility to uplift local and impoverished communities. This responsibility includes education of the community as to the role and benefit of conserving biodiversity and further stresses the importance of conserving our natural resources. Weekly trips are made into the local community to assist in various community projects that range from creating and maintaining vegetable gardens, recycling projects, painting classrooms and building jungle gyms.

These engagements are always enriching and rewarding. We do encourage participants to bring along donations in the form of sports equipment, clothing and stationery. A full list of requirements can be found on the booking confirmation.

### Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre (WRC)

Shamwari Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre was set up to aid in rehabilitating injured animals found on the reserve and surrounding community. The aim is to give the animals short-term care and release back into their natural environment. No animals are kept for the purpose of breeding in captivity but are hosted with the aim of giving them a second chance to take on life back in the wild. As WRC is a hands-off programme, volunteers will not engage in working with the animals, but visits and tours may be arranged.

### Vulpro@Shamwari

Vulpro is the only vulture conservation organisation of its kind on the continent, spearheading population restocking and supplementation to address the severe decline of African vulture species. Vulpro partnered with Shamwari to provide a significant boost to vulture conservation efforts in southern Africa. Vulpro@Shamwari offers a safe, well-balanced ecosystem for both in-situ and ex-situ conservation programmes, and provides financial support and sustainability. Importantly it limits risk because the largest captive breeding population of vultures is not concentrated in one location. Volunteer work includes cleaning waterholes and enclosures, collecting nesting material, replacing old perches and also feeding of vultures.

### Born Free Big Cat Sanctuary

The Born Free Foundation and Shamwari Private Game Reserve are both committed to the conservation of wildlife. Creating awareness and educating our guest and local population as to the importance of the protection and conservation of wildlife. We aim to promote the protection of habitat while maintaining a humane and compassionate approach to the care and welfare of any captive animals. This centre offers a wonderful opportunity to showcase and create awareness about the horrific way in which wildlife is exploited in captivity around the world. No breeding of cats is undertaken at the centre which is a sanctuary for lions and leopards who are unable to be reintroduced back into the wild. Your interaction may include a behind the scenes tour.

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### Alien Plant Control

Exotic and alien plants were introduced to the land by farmers for different reasons and uses. Today this exotic vegetation needs to be removed to be able to increase the natural biodiversity and decrease the likes of fire risk and better preserve our fast-diminishing natural water sources.

### Research Projects (short-term focus)

Undertaking of research projects with the focus on a value-added outcome for the reserve, or conservation as a whole, are viewed as an incumbency. These projects are often undertaken in conjunction with both local and foreign research studies to capturing data on lesser-known species such as the brown hyena.

Other Possible Activities may include:

- Sleep outs on the Big Five reserve
- Insect, rodent and birding surveys
- Night monitoring (bi-weekly)
- Anti Poaching Unit (APU) engagement

### Talks and Presentations:

#### In the Classroom

South Africa's Lion Industry

Rhino Poaching in South Africa

Ecological Management of Game Reserves

Elephant Conservation

#### In the Field

Medicinal Plants and Trees

Wildlife Tracks and Signs

Basic Wildlife Conservation Ecology and Management Principles

Astronomy

Animal Behavior

### Accommodation and Facilities

**Proctors Safari Lodge** hosts a maximum of 30 guests in the Northern extent of Shamwari Private Game Reserve with comfortable rooms sleeping up to 4 per room (same sex basis) sharing, ensuite shower or bath, toilet and basin per room. Shared cupboard space, airconditioned bedrooms and communal safe. The lodge facilities include communal lounge with fireplace, pool table, bar with guest fridge area for personal items, dining room, lecture or study room, swimming pool area, with outside boma (enclosure), for enjoying a relaxing evening around the fire and under the stars.

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## Laundry

Laundry services are provided on average once a week, with laundry bags supplied on arrival. It is advised that no delicate or high value clothing is brought or laundered. Although every care is taken with this guest service, SCE will not be held responsible for any damages to apparel as a result of hard water, colour runs, shrinkage or marking due to chemical cleaners. We do not have facilities for participants to do their own laundry, so please pack accordingly.

## Meals

Three meals are provided on a daily basis. Meals will be served either at the lodge or as a pre-packed serving, depending on planned and unscheduled activities. Vegetarians and other dietary requirements can be catered for, if notified in advance.

Cooked breakfasts are served once weekly – generally on Fridays, subject to programme change. Please note there are no facilities to service Kosher or Halaal requirements, but the supply of such meals can be serviced on request and availability.

Meals are prepared with a view to exposing participants to an array of local dishes in mind and are generally taken on a self-service basis, with the option of juice, tea or coffee and filtered rainwater. Soft drinks are available for purchase onsite and, with greater selection, from local trading stores.

## Sample Menu

### Breakfast:

cereal and toast, muesli and yoghurt, muffins and toast, cooked breakfast

### Lunch:

sandwiches, wraps and potato salad, quiche and pasta salad, burgers and chips

### Dinner:

macaroni and cheese with green salad, roasted chicken with vegetables, traditional meals for example braai and potjie (local type of meal similar to stew).

## Internet

Wi-Fi access is free of charge. Due to the relatively rural nature of the facility and position of the lodge, although internet speeds are certainly not up to international urban standards, they have however, proven to be more than effective for access and communication.

## Smartphones and Tablets

We recommend that volunteers pre-purchase data for the local Vodacom network either at the airport on landing or from the local general dealer prior to arriving at the reserve for ease of communication with family and friends during stay.

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## Gift Shop Smalls

On-site purchase of small consumables such as soft drinks, chocolates and other snack items are available. Also for sale are SCE branded items as well as various curios. There is a limited selection of alcoholic beverages on sale for those 18 years and older.

## Spa Treatments

Facials, manicures, pedicures and massages can be arranged on weekends with a therapist we have trained as part of our local community empowerment support projects. It is a very worthwhile indulgence after long days in the African bush!

## General Information – Suggested items to pack:

- Binoculars - essential for the best experience!
- Short and long sleeve t-shirts
- Long/short work trousers
- Hiking/work boots and trainers
- Sweatshirt/fleece
- Windbreaker/rain jacket
- Daypack rucksack
- Warm hat for winter and cap for sun all year
- Working gloves
- Winter gloves
- Changes of casual clothes for the evening
- Beach towel
- Swimming costume (summer months!)
- Toiletries
- Sunscreen / Insect Repellent
- Relative supply of any personal medication as required.
- Personal first aid kit
- Torch and water bottle (**filtered rainwater offered at the lodges**)
- Camera
- Reference books and notebooks
- Hair dryer
- 3-point round plugs or adaptor plugs for South African electricity
- Games, playing cards.
- Rehydrate powder or drinks.
- If you are a fussy eater, please bring snacks and drinks.
- Bring your own coffee if you are a fussy coffee drinker

**NB** - All work clothes must be of suitable colour for working in the bush, neutral or earth tones/colours are the most suitable. No brightly coloured or skimpy clothing to be worn whilst on the reserve.

Please note 16 years and older are welcome to participate in the conservation experience. However participants under the age of 18 years would require the consent of their legal guardians when applying.

All participants under the age of 18 years are advised to contact their local or nearest South African Embassy to confirm any current or required visa regulations and need for dual parental consent or to produce unabridged birth certification.

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