

**SOUTHERN SKY  
ADVENTURES**  
AFRICA...IN YOUR WILDEST DREAMS.

# VET STUDENT STUDY ABROAD SOUTH AFRICA

15 Days | 14 Nights

South Africa

# Veterinary Student Program

(2019 Students participated were third year students from the College of Veterinary Medicine University of Missouri, USA)

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- The program was established to provide “hands-on” experience for third year veterinary students to accomplish externship hours to qualify for preceptorship hours applied towards future applications of licensure for the state of Missouri. The experience consisted of:
- Training in the use of immobilization and reversing agents for tranquilization of wildlife in the bush of South Africa; three methods of darting animals were explored and were utilized during this experience
- Helicopter darting of antelope, rhino and elephants and ground darting of antelope and big cats
- Activities involved: wildebeest, zebra, eland were tranquilized to remove research collars as research data had been collected and research project completed; rhinos darted/tranquilized for ear notching identification; elephants darted/tranquilized for transport to another location; impala darted/tranquilized for ultrasound examination for pregnancy - trans-abdominally, trans-rectally and trans-vaginally techniques were used; sable antelope darted for semen collection and evaluation; cheetah darted after escaping reserve and returned to reserve; lions darted for dental evaluation inclusive of dental radiographs, extractions and root canals; lions darted and anesthetized for ovariohysterectomy (spay); lions radiographed for cervical lesions that were related to past nutritional issues
- Lectures provided about safety while working with large and dangerous wildlife; lectures provided about darting and tranquilizing wildlife to provide veterinary care; lectures provided regarding public health and wildlife veterinary conservation
- Game drives to see firsthand the environment of African wildlife and its impact on the local economy and its sustainability
- Throughout this experience the symbiotic relationship of wildlife veterinary medicine and public health, locally and globally, were emphasized



# DINOKENG GAME RESERVE

Located in Gauteng, South Africa, Dinokeng Game Reserve is home to the famous Big 5. The Dinokeng Game Reserve is the first free-roaming Big 5 game reserve in Gauteng. It is situated just 30 minutes drive from Pretoria and covers 18 500 hectares. The establishment offers a range of accommodation options for visitors wanting to stay and extend this amazing experience.

Apart from the Big 5, visitors can also spot cheetahs, brown hyenas and a wide variety of antelopes, zebras and giraffes. Visitors can enjoy activities such as: day and night-time game drives, sunset cruises, guided walks and fishing. Don't miss the opportunity to take a hot air balloon ride and experience the wonder of the bushveld while viewing game from a bird's eye view.



# THE WATERBERG BIOSPHERE

Situated amidst the towering Waterberg Mountains in the Limpopo Province, the Waterberg Biosphere, as the name suggests, serves as a water reservoir for the region. Renowned for its rugged beauty, the landscape is characterised by low-lying mountain ranges and escarpments, as well as a network of streams, rivers and lakes.

It is the home of South Africa's first-ever savannah biosphere reserve and is also home to many other nature reserves which provide a protected habitat for an array of wildlife. Visitors can enjoy a relaxing soak in natural hot springs, discover the ancient World Heritage-listed archaeological site in Makapans Valley, and view abundant bird life at the Nyslvley Wetlands.



# MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

Meaning 'place of sanctuary' in Tswana, Marakele National Park is just that. Set in the heart of the Waterberg Mountains, the park's position in a transitional zone between the dry western and moist eastern regions of the country, ensures great natural diversity.

Majestic mountains, grassy hills, deep valleys and stately, often rare, trees create an peaceful natural environment in which elephants, rhino, big cats and a variety of birds thrive, including one of the biggest colonies of the endangered Cape Vulture in the world.





# JOHANNESBURG

Johannesburg is one of Africa's biggest and most vibrant cities. It is the economic capital of Africa and the gateway to Southern Africa. Although not as famous as other South African destinations, there is plenty to do in Johannesburg and nearby Pretoria.

The old city is a multi-cultural mixture of traditional medicine shops, Chinese restaurants, taxi ranks and ultra-modern skyscrapers. There are excellent museums, art galleries and organised tours of historical and political interest. The shopping is Southern Africa's best and the many restaurants cater for all tastes. The nearby township of Soweto is Johannesburg's most popular tourist attraction.



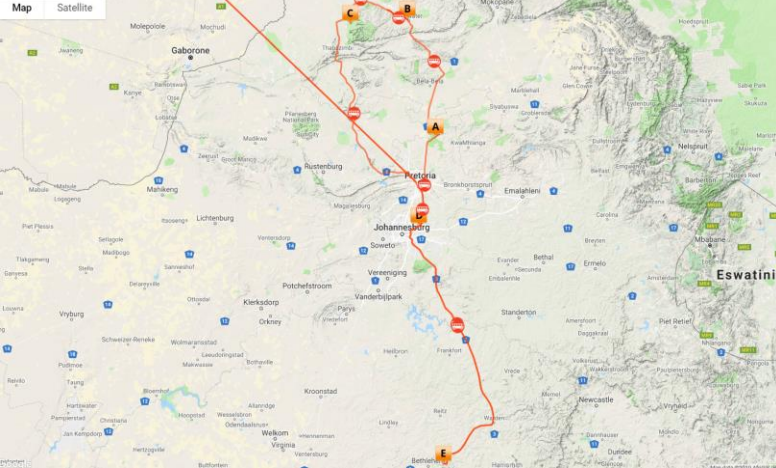
# EASTERN FREE STATE

The Eastern Free State is situated in the eastern quadrant of the South African province of the Free State.

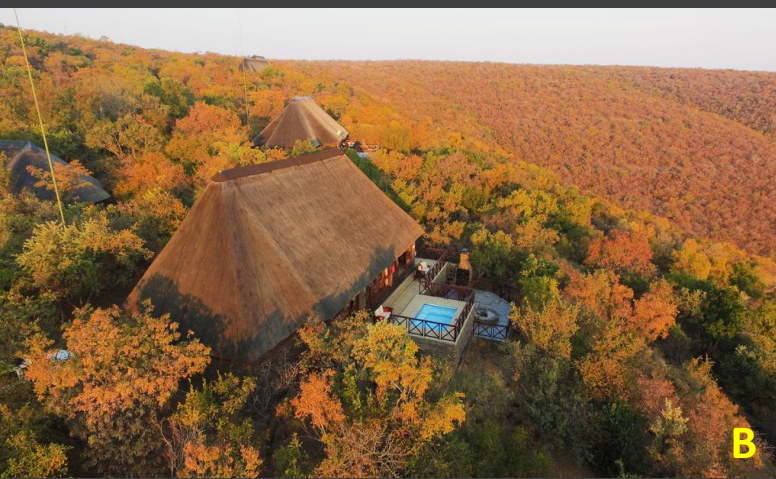
Featuring sprawling grass plains fringed by majestic mountains, this area possesses an alluring beauty. The spectacularly scenic landscape provides visitors with a plethora of historical, cultural, and natural destinations to choose from.

Visit Clarens, an artist's village resting at the slopes of the Maloti Mountain Range; immerse yourself in Sotho culture in Phuthaditjhaba at the Basotho Cultural Village; pop into historic Harrismith, home to a 250 million-year-old petrified tree; and observe over 60 big cats at the extraordinary wildlife rehabilitation centre of Bethlehem's Lions Rock.

Other popular attractions include the majestic sandstone cliffs at The Golden Gate Highlands National Park, which boasts a wide selection of wildlife and the Sterkfontein Dam Nature Reserve, a popular fishing and bird watching destination.



- A Leopard Song Game Lodge
- B Dinkweng Safari Camp
- C Elephant Camp at Marataba
- D Garden Court OR Tambo
- E Lionsrock Lodge

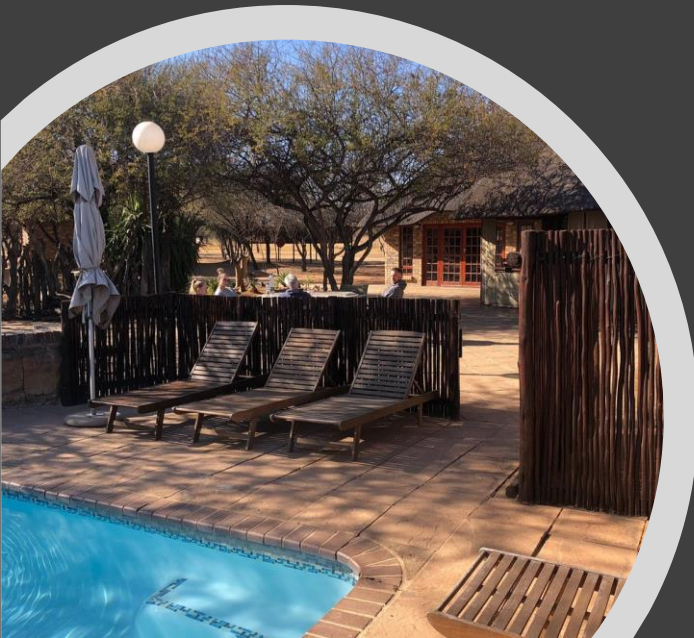




# DAY 1 : DINOKENG GAME RESERVE

Late evening arrival at OR Tambo. You will be met by your driver immediately after passing through customs, baggage claim and once through the arrival doors.

Your transfer to Dinokeng will be just over an hour by road north east of Johannesburg, passing through the presidential capital city Pretoria.



# DAY 2 : DINOKENG GAME RESERVE

Early morning game drive. Coffee at sunrise.

Return to camp for a traditional cooked English breakfast.

Enjoy most of the day in and around camp. Rest and recuperate from the previous day's travel.

A light lunch will be provided followed by a late afternoon game drive. Stop for sun-downers in the wilderness.

Return to camp after sunset for dinner.

Relax around the campfire.



# DAY 3 : THE WATERBERG BIOSPHERE

Early morning check out and departure from Leopard Song Game Lodge. Breakfast packs will be provided.

The Spurwing driver will collect the group at 06h00 sharp and head for Welgevonden Game Reserve to meet Dr Peter Caldwell. Expect a three-hour drive.

After a welcome and safety briefing the veterinary practical work will begin with Dr Peter Caldwell, his field assistant and the conservation team at Welgevonden Game Reserve.

Lunch will be packed and enjoyed at Welgevonden Game Reserve.

Departure from Welgevonden Game Reserve is expected around 17h00 (this may be extended). The road transfer to Dinkweng Safari Camp is approximately 1 hour.

Arrival at Dinkweng Safari Camp is expected at 18h00. Dinner will be prepared in advance and available on arrival.

After dinner the group can enjoy a self prepared campfire or head straight to bed.





# DAY 4 : THE WATERBERG BIOSPHERE

Muffins, yogurt and fresh fruit will be available for breakfast.

Depart Dinkweng at 08h00 for Welgevonden Game Reserve (1 hour by road).

Full day field work under the supervision and instruction of Dr Peter Caldwell.

Packed lunches will be enjoyed on site.

Departure from Welgevonden Game Reserve will be approximately 17h00 unless the field work requires a later departure. This will be determined by Dr Peter Caldwell and his field assistant.

This will conclude the veterinarian field work component at Welgevonden Game Reserve.

The road transfer to Dinkweng is approximately 1 hour. Dinner will be prepared prior to allow for a possible later arrival and can be heated and enjoyed by the group.

Camp fire and bed.



## DAY 5 : MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast items will be available at Dinkweng Safari Camp. Thereafter the morning can be spent at leisure.

The group must be packed and ready for departure at 11h00. Our driver will collect the group and head for Marataba Game Reserve. The road time is approximately 2 hours.

Lunch will be enjoyed on route and is not included/ provided for. The lunch stop will be approximately 90 mins.

Arrival at Marataba Game Reserve will be at approximately 16h00. You will be met by your host/ hostess at the Marataba Game Reserve gate nearest to Elephant Camp. You will be escorted to Elephant Camp where your driver will leave you in the care of your new hosts.

You will be welcomed, introduced to the team (who will be looking after you for the duration of your stay) and then listen to the safety briefing.

Your game drive will immediately follow with sun-downers served in the wilderness from a scenic stop.

Dinner will be served after your return to camp.

Enjoy the fireplace in the lounge or beside the fire pit outside immediately in front of the watering hole. This watering hole is frequently visited by elephant, cheetah, giraffe, zebra, wildebeest and various antelope. The tented units face directly onto the reserve bush veld.

Animal calls will be enjoyed throughout the night. Baboons, lions and hyena are particularly vocal at night in Marataba Game Reserve. ENJOY!!



# DAY 6 - 10 : MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

After a light breakfast (continental style) the group will be collected by game vehicles and driven to the conservation center where they will be introduced to Dr Andre Uys and his expert conservation team.

The full day will be dedicated to field work under the supervision and instruction of Dr Andre Uys and team.

Lunch will be provided on site.

Arrival back in camp will be approximately 18h00 with some time allowed for freshening up before dinner.

Activities at Elephant Camp will include star gazing (astronomy lecture), game drives and walks, sleep out under the stars in big game country and other. All are time permitting and weather dependent.

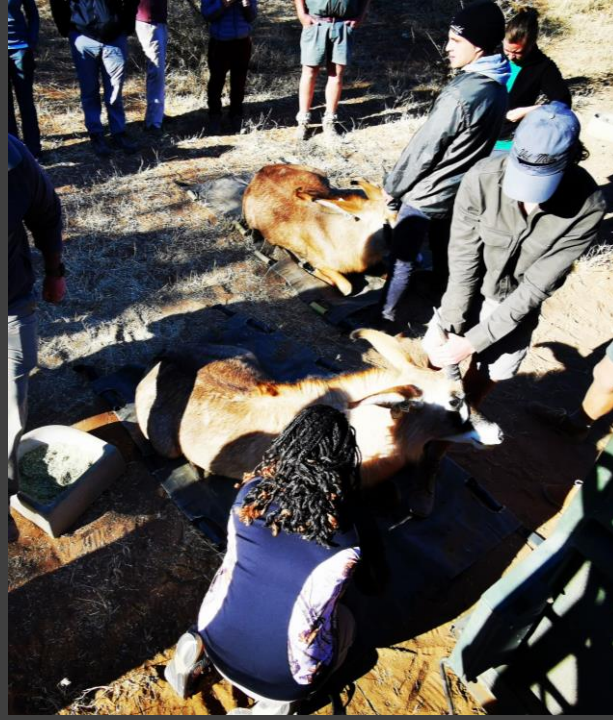




# Fieldwork: Day 6

## PHARMACOLOGY

- Wildlife pharmaceutical pharmacology basics by species groups
  - Antelope
    - Large / Small
  - Carnivores
    - Canids / Felids / Large / Small
  - Megaherbivores and pachyderms
    - Hippo / Elephants / Giraffe / Rhino (Black – White)
  - Humans
- Emergency treatment of accidental human intoxication with a variety of immobilising agents (discussion and practical)
- **PRACTICAL REMOTE PROJECTILE SYSTEMS:** Demonstration and practical handling and maintenance of the most commonly used remote projectile systems including; Pseudart, Dan-inject, Tel-inject and Capchur.
- The following topics will be addressed, and participants will get the opportunity to develop hands-on experience in the following:
  - Dart gun safety
  - Dart gun maintenance
  - Practical and preferred optics for effective use of dart guns
  - Dart selection per species
  - Loading and storing darts
  - Range practice with different systems
  - Helicopter operations:
  - Helicopter safety
  - Dart gun safety in the helicopter
  - Practical demonstration, each student will get an opportunity to fly in the heli immobilise an antelope



# Fieldwork: Day 7

## ANTELOPE (INCLUDING BUFFALO):

- General principles related to handling and positioning of herbivores
- Immobilisation cocktails for antelopes (review)
- Preferred darting sites
- Venipuncture sites and techniques in a variety of antelope species
- Practical Session – each student will lead a group through an immobilisation of an antelope
  - Ultrasound examination for pregnancy
  - Semen collection
  - Holding facility and transport container visit and discussion
- Talking stick discussion at sleepout





# Fieldwork: Day 8

## CARNIVORES

- General principles related to handling and positioning of carnivores
- Immobilisation cocktails for carnivores (review)
- Preferred darting sites
- Venepuncture sites and techniques in a variety of carnivore species
- Practical Session – Holding facility visit - discussion on management of holding facilities; lion call ups at night, establish baiting site and other techniques



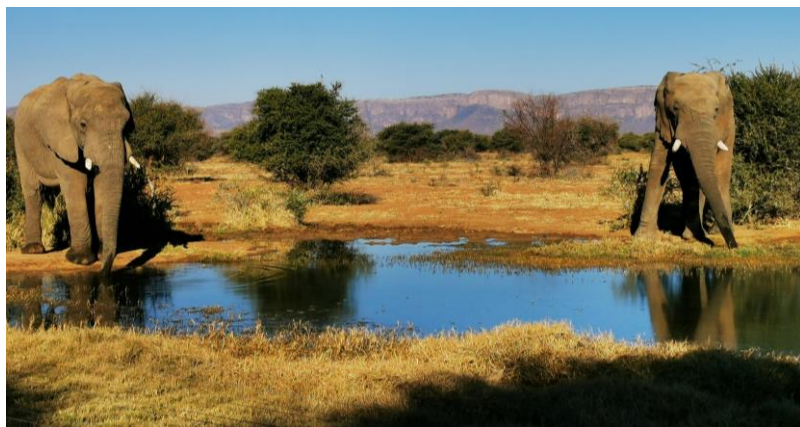


# Fieldwork: Day 9

## ELEPHANTS AND RHINOS

- General principles related to handling and positioning of elephants and rhino
- Immobilisation cocktails for pachyderms (review)
- Preferred darting sites
- Venepuncture sites and techniques in pachyderms
- Practical Session – notching or collaring
- Farewell braai





DAY 10 : MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

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# DAY 11 : JOHANNESBURG

- Cooked breakfast at 07h00.
- Check out from Elephant Camp and transfer pick up time is 08h00. The road transfer to Johannesburg is just short of 4 hours. You will stop on route for some gift shopping a Black Mamba Curio Shop in Vaalwater town.
- The next stop is Onderstepoort Veterinarian School for a tour of the faculty. The tour is scheduled for 12h00 and departure for Johannesburg is scheduled for 14h00.
- Arrival at Garden Court Hotel OR Tambo in Johannesburg is expected around 16h00. Check in and spend the afternoon at leisure. Rosie O'Grady's pub and grill is located in the hotel lobby and is a great spot for typical pub style food, Irish dishes and alcoholic drinks.
- Garden Court OR Tambo offer complimentary transfers to OR Tambo International Airport where there is a food court comprised of many chain restaurants. Spur is a steakhouse which is a local favorite here in SA. Definitely worth a try!
- Evening at leisure.



## DAY 12 : EASTERN FREE STATE

- Our driver will be ready to depart at 06h00.
- Breakfast must be purchased on route.
- The road time between Johannesburg and Lionsrock is approximately 5 hours.
- On arrival you will be welcomed by Dr Peter Caldwell and will immediately begin your veterinary field work. This practical may extend into the evening (at Dr Caldwell's discretion).
- Dinner will be served at Lionsrock Lodge. Enjoy the remainder of the evening around the campfire.



## DAY 13 : EASTERN FREE STATE

- A cooked breakfast will be enjoyed before the morning lecture with Dr Peter Caldwell.
- Lunch will be served at Lionsrock Lodge.
- The afternoon will be at leisure followed by a late afternoon/ evening game drive.
- Dinner will be a traditional braai (barbecue/ open fire grill).
- Campfire before bed.



## DAY 14 : EASTERN FREE STATE

- After a light breakfast the group will be transported to the conservation center at Lionsrock Lodge. The day will be spent on practical veterinarian work with Dr Peter Caldwell and team with a focus on big cats.
- Lunch will be served on site.
- Dinner will be back at the lodge.
- After some time around the campfire, the group will head to bed.



## DAY 15 : END OF ITINERARY

- Departure will be at 10h00 after a cooked English style breakfast. The road time to OR Tambo International Airport will be approximately 5 hours.
- Lunch can be purchased at the airport and there are many stores for some last-minute shopping.
- Check in is recommended 3 - 4 hours prior to flight departure.
- Bid farewell to your mother continent and prepare for the journey home.
- It has been a pleasure coordinating your trip and we look forward to assisting you again in the not so distant future! Thank you sincerely for your contribution to our conservation efforts here in South Africa and for your commitment towards the preservation of our wildlife. We hope that this trip will forever remain in your heart and that your experiences will be fondly remembered and shared with all of your loved ones.
- ***Hamba kahle (Zulu), totsiens (Afrikaans) and goodbye!***

