



High Schools South African Wildlife Expedition

Join us for this adventure of a lifetime, as we travel through carefully selected habitats in search of the diverse and wonderful African mega-fauna, and the colourful and vocal birdlife with two of South Africa's leading trackers and guides. Kersey Lawrence and Lee Gutteridge make a dynamic and knowledgeable team, and will gently guide your exploration as they lead you through some of the many regions of South Africa that they call home. This adventure will last for 17 days/16.



A giraffe chews on a bone, a common sight, African civet tracks in fine silt and the beautiful little bee-eater

What makes this a 'superior quality' experience?

- The fact that your **TWO Senior Tracker hosts, Lee Gutteridge and Kersey Lawrence, will be with you every step of the way.** We will dedicate all our effort and expertise to making this an unforgettable experience for you in terms of your learning and enjoyment, and for the quality of your tuition.
- Lee is the author of six southern African natural history books to date, is one of only 10 FGASA Scout Guides (the highest qualification that can be earned).
- Kersey, a PhD candidate at UCONN and an award-winning teacher, is the only female Senior Tracker in the world.



Your hosts Kersey Lawrence and Lee Gutteridge

- Our accommodation ranges from rustic and simple to luxurious, but it is always clean and comfortable, and more importantly it is in **VERY close contact with nature in a vast and open ecosystem.** In our home base, Ngala Camp, we literally have lions and elephants patrol past tents, just outside the unobtrusive electric fence! Many other companies programs are based in small, non-big five reserves, and you would have to travel out from your accommodation to get these truly wild experiences, or you would spend just a short part of your course in a big game environment.

- We are literally inside one of the largest open ecosystems in the world, with the possibility of seeing new lion prides, large nomadic herds of elephants or buffalo, and even wild dog and cheetah on any given day. On-the other-hand, because the animals roam at will, the possibility of a quiet day exists, too, and then we will focus on all of the little-things that form the foundation of this vast landscape; over a dozen antelope species, mongooses, birds, invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians, trees and other plants, human history, geology... and, of course, tracking! Very few companies have managed to secure this privilege within the educational sector.
- Our meals are of an **excellent quality**; we don't just keep you alive! We will ensure that we have well catered meals, as with all the learning you will need the energy! We try to accommodate dietary requirements such as for vegetarians and folks with allergies, as best as possible in the wilds of Africa. Please notify us well in advance.
- We will bring in **specialist guests**, if needed, to supplement your groups' interest.
- We always endeavor to be involved with some aspect of local **community upliftment**, wherever and whenever possible – but, unlike others, we strive to do this in a sustainable manner that improves the life of both the local people and of our program participants. If a community tour or project is unsustainable, or detrimental to the long-term sustainability of a community, we will not do it just for the sake of exposing our participants to “local people” for a feel-good moment.
- Your CyberTracker Track and Sign **evaluation is included** in your program (if you desire this bonus), giving you the opportunity to qualify on this international system right here in Africa, where tracking originated!

All of these aspects combine to make this a truly unique program, not offered by anyone else in Southern Africa.

We will spend our days doing a combination of different activities, all designed to enhance your understanding of the iconic African fauna, from the micro to the mega. These activities can include (but are not limited to):

- Track and sign interpretation sessions, linked to previously provided curriculum from your school's teachers, on identifying and counting animals. This is an exercise in conducting real science by collecting accurate data for longer-term projects on biodiversity, habitat analysis, behavior, individual identification of animals, and population estimation.
- Camera trapping and/or GIS mapping may be combined with the above
- Following animal trails with **Lee and Kersey**
- Human history chats, presentations and field practical experiences

- Night drives looking for nocturnal animals and astronomy sessions
- Safari game drives to view behaviours and photograph animals 'up close and personal'
- Presentations on animal identification, behavior, and tracks and signs to enhance your understanding of Southern African Tracking
- CyberTracker Track and Sign Identification and Interpretation Evaluation

We have hosted several different High Schools in South Africa before, over the last ten years, and now you and your learners are invited to experience a study abroad program like no other.

Included in the cost of this program:

- Safari experiences both on foot and by vehicle
- Professional guiding services of Lee Gutteridge & Kersey Lawrence
- Professional tracking instruction by Senior Trackers Lee Gutteridge & Kersey Lawrence
- Participation in a CyberTracker Track and Sign evaluation, the world's only international tracking evaluation system, and an opportunity to earn a qualification for this ancient skill in South Africa (which is recognized world-wide)
- Accommodation costs and activity fees on game reserves (Ngala Camp, KNP, Manyeleti camp*)
- Ground transportation on game reserves (Ngala Camp, KNP, Manyeleti camp*)
- Gate fees (Ngala Camp, KNP, Manyeleti camp*)
- Community levies
- Wholesome meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner in Ngala Camp and Manyeleti camp*; dinners only in KNP, including bottled water.
- Basic beverages in Ngala Camp and Manyeleti* (water and flavored drink mix, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate)
- Textbook written by Lee Gutteridge
- Use of camera traps, plaster, and other equipment as needed per program
- Lessons and lectures on natural history, animal behavior, astronomy, ecology, etc.
- Guest speakers as prearranged for your program

Not included in the cost of this program:

- All Flights
- Visas (if required), passports, and other travel documents
- Ground transportation to and from O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg and your program starting and ending point, near Hoedspruit.
- Meals en-route to and from Hoedspruit, and breakfast and lunch in Kruger National Park (KNP) as per program

- Beverages such as beer, wine (if allowed, for those over 18 years old), sodas, fruit juices, milkshakes, etc. (for those under 18)
- Souvenirs (curios)
- Gratuities for guides, trackers, transfer drivers and reserve staff
- Community levies
- Personal effects such as snacks, batteries, toiletries, camera chargers, electrical adapters, and other supplies
- Travel insurance
- Personal medications and medical insurance while in SA



A lion, an impala, a berth in one of our tents and a western stripe-bellied sandsnake

Specially Selected Venues Include:

Kruger National Park*

KNP is South Africa's first national park, and one of the largest game reserves in Africa. It is part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, a peace park that links Kruger National Park in South Africa with the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, and with the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, covering an approximate area of 35,000 square kilometers. This vast landscape includes many habitats and species, including the free-roaming and infamous African "Big Five": lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant and Cape buffalo, which everyone wants to see. In KNP we will be staying in "rondawels" or African round huts, or in cabins inside fenced and managed national park rest-camps, these units all have electricity and running water; expect to have a roommate.

Ngala Bush Camp, Balule region*

This is in the greater Kruger National Park eco-system, meaning that it is in a privately owned area but with no fences between it and the nationally managed KNP. This allows a free flow of wild animals and every day has potential for some new and extraordinary sighting from the small and scaly pangolin to massive herds of migrating African elephants. It is one of the newer regions to be opened to KNP and thus, many of the animals are still truly wild and skittish. As our base camp, it is here

that we can disembark from our vehicles and walk, exploring the land and its denizens in great detail.

Ngala Camp is a proper African Bush Camp. It is a tented camp, all tents are large canvas dome tents that you can stand up in and move about. Each tent is furnished with thick mattresses for sleeping (not camp pads) and a clean sheet, but you will need to bring your own sleeping bag, and a pillow if you desire one. Expect to have a roommate. There are flushing toilets available within a very short walk from each tent, and hot eco-showers. A 7-strand solar-powered electrical fence surrounds the camp and enhances your safety. There is a generator in camp that we will use for charging camera batteries and such, as needed.

Manyeleti*

The Manyeleti region of greater KNP (open to the Kruger, but not part of) is owned by the Mnisi Shangane Community. The Manyeleti has been open to KNP for many, many years and thus has a great diversity and abundance of habituated wildlife – this means that the animals are familiar with the sights, sounds and smells associated with people and safari vehicles – so we can get nice and close for observation and photography without disturbing their natural behaviors! Our stay in Manyeleti will be slightly more fancy than previous venues; expect to have a roommate.

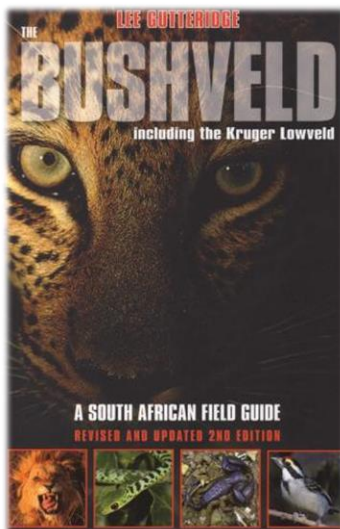
**Please note that we cannot guarantee exact bookings or venues this far in advance, and in the event that a camp or reserve is unavailable for the dates we need, we will reserve something of equal or better value.*

Our Proposed Itinerary

(subject to change based on changes in your timetable, and on unforeseen events, such as traffic or the spontaneous viewing of a magnificent leopard crossing the road)

Day 1

- You will arrive together in the early morning from your overseas flight, at O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg. (Please note: This flight is not included in your course fees and must be part of your personal travel arrangements.)
- You will be transferred from the airport by bus through the reputable Sable Tours or Ashton's Transfers (as per your choice) across the country to the little town of Hoedspruit, alongside Kruger National Park (this transfer is to be at your own cost and by your arrangement). This is a beautiful journey through the metropolis of Johannesburg, over the cool and wet Highveld, and down a mountain pass into the warmer and dryer Lowveld country. You will see the myriad ways in which people live in South Africa, from towns to townships, and potentially see various animals such as blesbok, ostrich, warthog, and giraffe, and of course, many interesting and unique bird species endemic to South Africa ...or, you may elect to take a nap and catch up on some of your missed sleep from traveling all night.
- Your hosts, Lee and Kersey will meet your group in Hoedspruit with our game viewers (open-air safari vehicles) and a baggage trailer. We will transfer you to Ngala Camp, first allowing you some time to visit the local grocery shop, where you can purchase forgotten personal items and comfort foods such as toiletries, chips, other snacks and cool drinks. A light lunch will be waiting for us upon arrival at Ngala Camp.
- We will then settle in to our bush camp and freshen up before we meet for a safety briefing and "do's and don'ts" discussion regarding the area we will be living in for the next few days.



During this orientation, you will receive your complimentary course textbook for the duration of the course, Bushveld, including the Kruger Lowveld, a South African Field Guide, written by your host, Lee Gutteridge (2008).

Bushveld is a comprehensive field guide for the region and contains most of the information you will need for the area. It includes chapters on ecology, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, scorpions, spiders, butterflies and moths, tracks and signs, flowers, euphorbias, trees, grasses, and fungi. For the odd bit of information not contained in Bushveld, or for deeper research, a small camp library will be available.

- Once this discussion has been done, we will prepare for our very first ‘Safari’ or ‘Game Drive’! The main focus of this afternoon safari will be to give you a big picture view of the area, exposing you to a little of the rugged African landscape where you will be living for the next short while and of course to seek out opportunities to view the magnificent African wildlife.
- We will only return to camp after sunset, spotlighting for nocturnal creatures along the way, arriving back at base to a sumptuous hot meal and roaring campfire.
- After dinner, those who still feel rested can gather to socialize around the campfire, and to listen to the chorus of night sounds, while those who are feeling the effects of their travels can head off to bed and a good night’s rest.



A black-backed jackal nervously surveys the bush, and two of our tents at Ngala Camp in Balule, in the Greater Kruger National Park

Day 2 - 9

For the next while in our bush camp **a typical day consists of** an early wake up and a 6 am light self-service breakfast of rusks, cereal, fruit, toast, hot porridge, coffee, tea and hot chocolate. At 6:30 AM we will gather our cameras and binoculars, as this meal is followed by a morning activity lasting until 10-10:30 AM.

Morning activities include the following options:

- A drive on our open-topped 4x4 bush vehicles
- A guided walk with armed guides leading the way in search of an on foot experience viewing elephants or lions (or other game animals)
- A track and sign interpretation session, or data collection session
- Following the trail of a herd of elephants, a pride of lions, a leopard, a rhinoceros, or other animal
- A peaceful morning at a specially chosen sit spot on the banks of a beautiful river to observe wildlife and bird language



A herd of elephants come to drink at a waterhole in Balule, and a lion cub which was seen just a few hundred metres from Ngala Camp with its family

Once the morning activity is completed we shall return to camp for a hot brunch, which should satisfy our hunger nicely. At Ngala Camp, at any time, if hunger strikes, there are always options of fresh fruit, sandwiches or a cup of coffee and cookies throughout the day at our snack station.

After brunch there will be a mid-day group activity or time for journaling, siesta, or quiet wildlife observations. Around 3-3:30 pm we begin an afternoon activity that lasts until after sunset, spotlighting for nocturnal wildlife along the way back to camp, arriving to a wholesome hot meal and discussion of the day's activities around the campfire. Some evenings will include a visit by a special guest lecturer.



Spotted hyenas are common at Ngala Camp, but unfortunately white rhinoceroses are becoming rare and shy across the region due to poaching

Morning, mid-day and afternoon activities can include:

- Game drives in open-air safari vehicles to observe wildlife
- Track and Sign Identification and Interpretation on walks and drives
- Trailing of an animal in intimate groups
- Bush walks focusing on observing the little things that weave together an ecosystem
- Encounters on foot with charismatic megafauna
- Sit-spots and related discussions
- Bird language and related discussions
- Mapping and documentation activities and discussions on how to

interpret these observations

- Camera trapping
- Track casting
- Paleo-anthropological and human history discussions
- Bush skills sessions
- An evening sundowner stop at a beautiful viewpoint around sunset



A greater kudu cow feeds on a long-tailed cassia seed pod, and a herd of elephants cross a sand flat on the Olifants River

Night time activities can include aspects such as:

- Socializing around the campfire and sharing tracking stories
- Astronomy sessions focusing on the African sky
- Night drives
- Searching for scorpions with UV lights
- Presentations by special guests or by your hosts or teachers

Day 10

Today you will be evaluated in South African Tracks and Signs, their identification and interpretation, on the internationally reputed CyberTracker system. We shall spend a full day in the field interpreting sign, behaviors, gaits and species identification according to the standards set by CyberTracker, which we will have been practicing all week! This will be a long strenuous day, but hopefully a rewarding day for our learners, resulting in good scores, a badge and a certificate to be awarded in a special ceremony, and your name on the CyberTracker website as a Tracker in Africa!



Senior Tracker Kersey Lawrence discussing tracks with some professional trackers, and Lee teaching tracking and bush skills on a guided walk in his usual animated way, and a stunning sighting of a beautiful adult male lion.

Day 11 - 13

Today, after a brief breakfast we will pack and depart early in the morning from Ngala Camp to Kruger National Park, the nationally managed section of our journey. We will be picked up at Ngala Camp by special KNP registered game viewing vehicles and drive the long, dusty road out of Balule and into the Orpen Gate of KNP. Pack a day bag with water, snacks, your camera, binoculars, your journal, and anything else you may need for a full day, because the bulk of your luggage will be going ahead of you in the trailer on a private vehicle. We will slowly drive the roads of Kruger, steeped in history, looking for animals. We will stop for lunch, which will be at your own cost at one of the many scenic rest camps within the park, and after lunch we will continue our meandering way to Skukuza rest camp in the south of KNP, where we will provide dinner for you, wrap up any details, and thereafter you can relax with your friends or turn in for a good night's sleep. You should visit the well-stocked gift shop and mini-grocery store for curious and breakfast/lunch snacks for the following day.

On the following morning you will provide your own breakfast because we will be leaving before the shops are open. We will pack our bags and explore the south of Kruger, all the little roads, and then head north to Satara, almost mid-way through the park. We will stop at another scenic rest camp for lunch at your own cost. You should pack a day-pack with what you need for a long day in-the-field, as your big bags will once again go ahead of you to Satara. Dinner at Satara will be provided for you, and again, you will have the opportunity to visit the shops for curios, snacks, and breakfast/lunch items. We will sleep at Satara rest camp.

On the next day we will explore the middle and northern sections of Kruger, including the Masorini Archeological Site and Museum. We will again stop for lunch at your own cost at one of the rest stops. Our day will end at Letaba rest camp, where you we will provide dinner and you will again be able to visit the shops for breakfast items, snacks and curios. At Letaba we can also visit the Elephant Museum, where some of the

biggest tusks ever found in the Kruger are kept. The fascinating display and information centre is certainly a place to visit for an hour or two!

Day 14 - 16

Today we will depart KNP early in the morning for a camp in the Manyeleti, a community owned game reserve to the south. We should arrive there around mid-day to settle into the luxury camp and depart after a wholesome lunch on an afternoon/early evening game drive. We will stop for traditional sundowner drinks (these can be non-alcoholic sodas and juices), sightings permitting. We then return to camp after dark to a sumptuous dinner.

On one of these days, mid-day, there may be an opportunity for a community visit, to the village where some of the staff live with their families. This community tour would be led by a local resident, and at the own cost of participants.



A group of buffaloes relax together in the Manyeleti, and our guests enjoy a safari sundowner in the west of the Manyeleti reserve near our camp

A typical day in Manyeleti consists of an early morning awakening to a light breakfast of fruit, yogurt and granola, tea, coffee and hot chocolate. With the sun rising, we will depart on a 3-4 hour game drive, touring this flatter, wetter, and thus often greener area of the Kruger Park's private game areas. Mid-morning there is a stop for coffee, tea, and cookies, depending on the activity level of the animals (a great sighting might warrant skipping a coffee!) After our morning game drive we will return to camp for a big breakfast, and are free until 2 pm when lunch is served. During that time you can relax, take some personal time, visit the wildlife blind over the watering hole, or watch an elephant drink from the swimming pool. After lunch we will again depart on a 3-4 hour game drive to view wildlife, returning after sunset whilst spotlighting for nocturnal creatures, before we return to camp for a well catered dinner.



Zebras stand and pose whilst two elephants play in the water

Day 17

Today is sadly our last morning in the bush. We will wake for a light breakfast and perhaps a shortened game drive, depending on the time of your flights and the anticipated traffic later in the day. After this, your tour company vans will arrive from Sable Tours* to collect you at the Manyeleti site and you will depart to O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg for your late afternoon/evening flights back to the USA, bidding farewell to us, your African hosts, and to this extraordinary experience in the wild places of Africa. **This transfer is at your own cost and arrangement.*

Why the quality of your guide matters...

Despite all the flashy marketing campaigns that you might see, not everyone is capable of providing an African experience safely, professionally, and passionately. It takes knowledge, skill, awareness, and experience.



In the photograph above Lee can be seen dissuading an African elephant bull from harassing a student group behind him. The cloud of dust is from the huge feet of the elephant sliding to a halt in front of him.

Of course, many people ask us about this image, and it has turned out to be useful in explaining why it is important to work with experienced guides when operating in areas with Africa's Big Game, on foot and by vehicle.

This elephant saw us and approached us quickly and aggressively, from far away, while we were on foot; we did not approach it or harass it in any way, or encourage it to come closer.

During this moment Kersey was managing the group right behind Lee, who was up front with the elephant; both were armed with high-caliber rifles required by the industry for protection. As Lee went forward to meet and turn the elephant, Kersey's focus was to keep the group calm and together, ensuring that no one panicked and

ran away – which would have made the situation infinitely worse for everyone. There were no escape routes for the group nearby; no dry river beds to put between us and the elephant, no huge termite mounds to climb... and elephants can push down even large trees! We had to stand our ground.

It is important to understand that in this instance, because of their years of experience, that Lee and Kersey correctly interpreted the body language of the elephant, and made snap decisions to move forward to meet and confront the bull elephant, instead of shooting him. Both guides remained calm and focused. Confrontation is a tried and tested technique used to diffuse the potentially dangerous aspect of this huge animal's approach, but it requires previous experience using the technique, as well as the ability to read the animal's body language efficiently and accurately. The wide-open ears, high headed posture, bouncing motion of the animal and the fact that it paused in its approach with a thin line of vegetation between itself and the walking group all showed an uncertainty to attack (to the trained eye), which then allowed a non-violent option to protect the group. Only years of experience will give you this awareness. The bull, confused and intimidated at being confronted, stopped his charge and turned back the way he had come while we quickly and safely left the area.

The picture was taken by one of our student participants, and it is very rare in these instances to get an image, as these situations are avoided as much as possible, and usually very sudden if they occur. The last thing we usually think to do is to take pictures!

It is important to note that in almost 35 years of combined experience with tracking potentially dangerous animals we have never had to use our rifles in self-defense. Encounters like this are rare but can happen. Our goal is to continue with this record!

About Your Guides



Kersey Lawrence is the first woman in the world to earn the rank of Senior Tracker in the internationally renowned CyberTracker system, and as such she stands as the sole female amongst the few dozen men who have also earned this rigorous qualification. In addition to her decade of guiding experience, Kersey also has several degrees in science and education, and is currently completing her Ph.D. through the University of Connecticut, where she also received an award for excellence in teaching. Kersey owns **Original Wisdom**, an education company offering both local programs in the USA and study abroad programs in Southern Africa in ecology, culture and tracking. Courses are custom designed according to the academic requirements and adventurous desires of the visiting faculty, professor, or group leader. Kersey's passionate approach to interpreting tracks and signs in nature and following trails will amaze and inspire you, as you spend time with her in the Africa she now calls home.



Lee Gutteridge has spent all of his adult life in the African bush, with more than 26 years of dirt-time. Lee is currently amongst the highest qualified field guides in Southern Africa (a Scout guide on the FGASA system, with many additional specializations) and the author of six published natural history books. Lee's company, **Nature Guide Training** began over sixteen years ago as a training school for field guides in the safari industry in Southern Africa and has a well-earned reputation as an industry leader whose graduates are employed by some of the finest lodges across Africa. As a respected guide and trainer of guides, a Senior Tracker and a wildlife author, Lee will educate and inspire you with passionate tales of African animals, wildlife trails and close escapes.

Lee and Kersey have been working together in Africa since 2008, designing and implementing these types of study abroad, ecotourism, and tracking intensive programs. Original Wisdom and Nature Guide Training work closely together to provide you with a truly exceptional, professionally guided, life-changing educational experience in the African bush. Thousands of participants have passed through these schools, and experienced Africa like never before.

**More information about Kersey Lawrence and Lee Gutteridge can be found at
OriginalWisdom.com & NatureGuideTraining.com.**



Nature Guide Training



Original Wisdom

On our websites, you can also find information regarding our history, philosophy,
venues, and programs.

For a suggested packing list, go here:

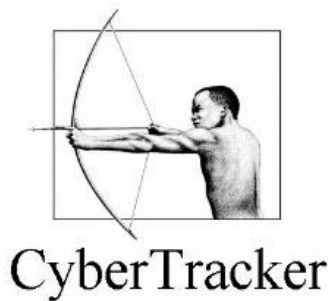
<http://www.originalwisdom.com/what-to-bring-to-ngala-camp/>

For answers to frequently asked questions, please visit:

<http://www.originalwisdom.com/faqs-frequently-asked-questions/>

For our cancellation policy, see:

<http://www.originalwisdom.com/our-policies/>



**We are endorsed by the African Field Guides Association, CyberTracker
Conservation, and the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa**