



**Nkonzo Wildlife Research**  
www.wildlife-research.com  
**Information Pack**

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## Welcome

This guide will provide you with everything you need to know to prepare for your position and trip to Limpopo, South Africa. We wish you a safe trip and a great experience while working with Nkonzo Wildlife Research, and we hope that this document will answer many of your questions. Should you require any additional information, email us at [info@wildlife-research.com](mailto:info@wildlife-research.com) or visit our website at [www.wildlife-research.com](http://www.wildlife-research.com).

**Nkonzo Wildlife Research**

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## About Us

Established in 2013, Nkonzo Wildlife Research offers affordable opportunities for aspiring conservationists and researchers. We transparently allocate funds, covering essential expenses, while also directly funding research initiatives and benefiting local communities. We emphasize collaboration and data sharing for maximum conservation impact, actively partnering with relevant organizations and aligning our research efforts with existing conservation programs. This way, we contribute to broader conservation goals, adopting a holistic approach that benefits both wildlife and local communities.

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## Research Staff

### **Dr. Leah Findlay**

Dr. Leah Findlay brings over a decade of experience in human-wildlife conflict research in South Africa. Using her academic background, she oversees research initiatives, coordinates fieldwork, and facilitates data exchange for meaningful conservation efforts.

### **Chanelle Becker**

Chanelle Becker, brings a wealth of experience from her background in habitat management, game translocation, and conservation efforts. She oversees operational aspects, conducts fieldwork, manages data collection, and supports ongoing research initiatives across research stations for effective conservation outcomes.

### **Arno Smit**

With over two decades of experience in wildlife conservation and research, Arno Smit brings unparalleled expertise and dedication to our team. His unwavering commitment to preserving natural habitats and fostering sustainable practices has made him a respected figure in the field. His dedication and expertise continue to drive impactful conservation efforts across diverse ecosystems.

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## Projects

### **Rhino Conservation: Insights Into Dehorning Effects**

Join Nkonzo Wildlife Research in studying white rhino behavior, focusing on the effects of dehorning, a method used to reduce poaching risk. You will collaborate closely with rangers and experienced researchers to collect valuable data and contribute to rhino conservation efforts.

### **Giraffe Guardians**

Within South Africa, the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) is conducting a comprehensive program to study privately-owned giraffes' abundance, distribution, and genetic diversity. This data will be used to develop a National Giraffe Conservation Strategy. Through our dedicated giraffe research program, we conduct behavioral observations and create ID kits for giraffes, sharing this valuable data with GCF.

### **Free-from: Snare Removal Programme**

All participants actively engage in removing snares, a prevalent and devastating method of wildlife poaching in South Africa. Our snare removal program protects a diverse array of species, helps to deter poaching, raises community awareness, and enables data-driven conservation strategies.

### **Weed Warriors: Invasive Species Management**

Participate in a collective effort alongside experienced conservationists at Nkonzo Wildlife Research to combat invasive non-native plants, preserving native habitats and promoting ecological balance for a healthier environment.

### **EcoExplorers: Local Environmental Education**

Participants can get involved in conducting environmental education initiatives in nearby schools. This enables you to foster connections with local communities, gives you an insight into Indigenous culture, and offers something slightly alternative for participants at Nkonzo Wildlife Research.

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## Research Stations

Our research stations are located in the northern reaches of Limpopo, which boasts an array of ecosystems that support a wide variety of wildlife. Iconic baobab trees are dispersed within a mosaic of habitats, where an abundance of species thrive, from agile antelopes to elusive predators like leopards. However, the habitat faces challenges such as habitat fragmentation, human-wildlife conflict, and the encroachment of agricultural activities. Efforts to conserve and protect Limpopo's habitat are essential to safeguarding its biodiversity for future generations.

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# Accommodation

## Rooms & Kitchen

Our research camp offers shared rooms, a communal kitchen, and a barbeque area, stocked with basic cutlery and cookware. Tap water is clean and potable, and a gas stove/oven and shared fridge/freezer space are available. Each room accommodates up to four people. Single beds with pillows, pillowcases, and bed sheets are provided. Each room shares a bathroom with a flushing toilet, sink, and hot shower. Participants are responsible for their own washing and cleaning.

## Laundry

Each camp has an 'African bush laundry' where you can handwash your clothes.

## Amenities

There is basic wifi access at camp, but due to limited bandwidth, reasonable restrictions to usage will be explained upon arrival. Camps are powered by municipal electricity and therefore regularly experience scheduled power outages.

## Phone Service

We request you bring a personal mobile phone for communication and data entry, and consider purchasing a South African SIM card upon arrival for better and cheaper connectivity (MTN is recommended). Reception is limited, with 'hot spot' areas and there are no landlines available.

## Supplies

A weekly supply run into town is scheduled for provisions. Depending on vehicles and staff needs, we may only be able to take one participant at a time. This means you will be able to get necessities once a week, but may have to give your shopping list to another participant who will shop for you.

## Insurance

Please arrange private travel and health insurance prior to arrival. Accidents can happen, so it is important that all participants have sufficient traveler coverage.

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# Health & Safety

## On Camp

*Illnesses:* Our research stations are currently in a low-risk malaria area, but please consult your physician before taking any pre-treatments. Tick bite fever can occur from tick bites. Symptoms are flu-like, but the illness is treatable.

*Natural Elements:* Temperatures are often high, so wearing appropriate clothing, carrying/drinking sufficient water, and wearing sunscreen is imperative to reduce the chances of sunburn and heatstroke. Our research stations are home to many potentially dangerous wildlife species. Remaining aware and adhering to the rules will prevent unwanted encounters with both large and small animals.

*Creepy-crawlies:* It is necessary to wear closed-toed shoes outside, use a flashlight at night, and inspect bed linens, towels, and shoes to help avoid bites and stings from insects and snakes.

*Medical Aid:* Please note that the nearest clinic with treatment for minor injuries and illnesses is within 60 km, while the closest hospital is 180 km away.

### **Off Camp**

*People:* Use good judgment when speaking with strangers and do not divulge too much personal information. Try to keep phone, credit/debit cards, and cash on person while in stores.

*Cars:* Always wear a seatbelt and drive within the speed limit. Drivers can be careless, so always be careful when walking in town.

*General:* Do not go anywhere without telling another participant or staff member. Keep valuables put away and/or attended to.

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## **Code of Conduct**

Nkonzo Wildlife Research proudly works and partners with other organizations and local communities, so it is important to remember everyone comes from a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles that all must be respectful of.

### **Values**

Nkonzo Wildlife Research is strongly against any form of discrimination. Always be kind and respectful to people around you, their opinions and beliefs. Try to maintain a positive attitude and always be honest.

### **Rules**

- Leave it how you find it, or better.
- Close doors and windows when you leave.
- Turn off air conditioning and lights when not needed.
- Unplug electronics not in use.

### **Principles**

- Alcohol consumption is allowed during off-time but must be done responsibly.
- The use or possession of any illegal drugs is strictly prohibited.

### **Standards**

- Keep all areas - especially shared ones - clean and tidy.
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# Travel

## International Travel

Participants should plan to arrive at Polokwane International Airport where they will be personally greeted and transported to camp by Nkonzo Wildlife Research staff. If a direct flight to Polokwane is not possible, flying to Johannesburg - OR Tambo International Airport (JNB) and getting a connecting flight to Polokwane is an option. A shuttle service also runs from JNB to Polokwane. The currency is the South African Rand (ZAR). Withdrawals from ATMs can easily be done in town, but participants should check the charges with their bank. Although we are flexible, we encourage participants to arrive on a Thursday.

## Visas

< 90 Day Stay: Participants from the UK, Germany, France, Netherlands, US, Australia, and other select countries can stay in South Africa visa-free for up to 90 days, with the option to extend their stay up to 180 days by visiting the local visa office within the first 30 days of arrival, at their own cost.

90 Day Stay: Participants staying longer than 180 days should apply for an extended visitor's visa before arriving in South Africa, a process that can take up to 3 months. For detailed visa requirements and application procedures, please visit <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/gbr/en/zaf>.

Documents often required for a visa include:

- Visa application form
  - Valid passport with at least 30 days validity beyond intended stay and 2 blank pages
  - Proof of sufficient funds
  - Proof of accommodation in South Africa
  - Proof of travel insurance
  - Certificate of yellow fever vaccination (if applicable)
  - Return flight tickets
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# Financial Details

## Rates

2299 GBP - 28 Nights

1199 GBP - 14 Nights

### Rates include:

**Research supervision:** In the field and academically, our qualified staff and research assistants will provide you with the appropriate supervision and support during your stay.

**Research facilities:** All research equipment is provided. This includes but is not limited to GPS, camera traps, radio, compass, library, communal desktop computer, databases, and internet access (Wi-Fi).

**Research Camp:** The research camp is fully equipped with everything needed for daily life. You are provided with a bedroom (including linen), a standard bathroom (with hot shower and flushing toilets), and a communal kitchen (including a stove, microwave, fridge, crockery & cutlery). Tap water is drinkable and electricity (220V) is available. Considering our remote location, it may be that you experience occasional water or electricity shortages for short periods during your stay. Housekeeping and cleaning staff operate once a week. Wi-Fi is accessible in most common areas.

**Meals:** Our rate includes three delicious meals per day. Enjoy a hearty breakfast, a satisfying lunch, and a delightful dinner, all self prepared with fresh, quality ingredients. Each meal is designed to provide balanced nutrition and cater to a variety of tastes, ensuring you have the energy and satisfaction to make the most of your stay.

**Transfers:** Your transport from any location in Polokwane to the Research Camp and vice versa, upon arrival and departure, is provided by staff members.

**Reserves:** The conservation fees are a compulsory daily fee to access the reserves. It is mandatory for anyone entering the reserve and is already included in your rate.

### Rates exclude:

Drinks, external activities and laundry are not included.

Telephone/Fax are not included but you can buy a South African SIM card at the airport upon arrival. We recommend MTN as their signal coverage is the most reliable around here.

### General Terms and Conditions:

You should arrange your own international travel, recommended vaccines / medication / health supplies, and accident and / or travel insurance. We assume no liability for injuries to persons or damage/loss of equipment.

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# Packing

## Clothing

Participants should pack lightweight, breathable clothing for daytime wear and warmer layers for cooler evenings and mornings. Neutral-colored clothing is recommended for wildlife observation. Closed-toe shoes, a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and a swimsuit are essential. Rain gear is also advisable during the wet season.

## Gear

Bring a good-quality flashlight, refillable water bottle, binoculars, and a camera if desired. Participants should also pack personal toiletries, sunscreen, insect repellent, and any prescription medications. Remember that the camp is remote, and it may be difficult to purchase specialty items once there.

## Documentation

Ensure you have your passport, visa (if required), travel insurance details, and any necessary medical documentation easily accessible. It is advisable to make copies of important documents and keep them separate from the originals.

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Thank you for choosing Nkonzo Wildlife Research. We look forward to your arrival and hope you have a rewarding and memorable experience with us in South Africa! For any further questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us at [info@wildlife-research.com](mailto:info@wildlife-research.com).