

# The Young Conservationist

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MOSSEL BAY, SOUTH AFRICA

16-18 YEAR OLD'S

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Nkonzo Wildlife Research  
[www.wildlife-research.com](http://www.wildlife-research.com)

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[WWW.WILDLIFE-RESEARCH.COM](http://WWW.WILDLIFE-RESEARCH.COM) | [INFO@WILDLIFE-RESEARCH.COM](mailto:INFO@WILDLIFE-RESEARCH.COM)

# IDEOLOGY and ETHICS

The Young Conservationist Program is a rounded educational conservation based experience for High School and Secondary Students. Providing a unique way to experience South Africa's wildlife and culture in a structured and safe environment. Nkonzo's ideology and ethics as a company expand to The Young Conservationist Program through all aspects.

**EDUCATE:** To increase awareness and educate individuals and groups from all walks of life regarding the various conservation issues and threats to African environments and their sustainability through hands on training, involvement, and workshops.

**ACT:** Field research in wildlife areas to protect the environment and study those that inhabit it, the Young Conservationist Program specifically works with wildlife monitoring, biodiversity sampling, and hands-on education in the field to assist in the experience appropriate areas of our national conservation efforts.

**EMPOWER:** To foster the care, knowledge, and initiative in students and participants to continue making an active difference in wildlife conservation from all over the globe in promotion of a sustainable and animal friendly future.

## EDUCATE

- Dangerous Game Approach Methods
- Introduction to Animal Behaviour
- Bush Survival Basics
- Research Basics
- Wildlife Management
- Areas of African Wildlife Conservation
- Anthrozoology
- Ethical Tourism
- Invasive Species
- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health

## ACT

- White Rhino Dominance Hierarchy
- Wildlife Monitoring
- Reserve Maintenance
- Elusive Mammal Movement
- Fynbos Rehabilitation
- Game Counts
- Surveillance
- Endemic Species Movement

## EMPOWER

Previous Student and Interns (to name a few) have gone on to:

- Film Anti-Poaching Documentaries
- Manage ETHICAL Big Cat Sanctuaries
- Devote PhD focuses on group dynamics of Elusive Mammals
- Enter Anti-Poaching Training to become rangers
- Educate local and international tourists on the importance of free roaming wildlife and protected areas.

Nkonzo Wildlife Research focuses exclusively on ethical wildlife conservation and research that operate with immediate and long-term goals and conclusions that directly benefit the quality of life, coexistence, and sustainability of wildlife in Southern Africa.

NWR neither endorses nor supports the practice of or institutions providing wildlife interactions in the form of cat walks, cub petting, elephant rides or feedings, or any subset thereof; nor does it support or endorse captive animal hunting, the breeding of wildlife for hunting, or any institution supporting or providing these services be it directly or indirectly.



## **OVERVIEW**

All students and chaperones are housed together at a local facility in the coastal town of Mossel Bay. Here they stay in shared dormitory style accommodation with full access to all facilities, including but not limited to; swimming pool, free WiFi, Adventure Centre, recreation room, and more.

As an all-inclusive opportunity, Nkonzo arranges and facilitates the full experience from pick-up at the airport to your return to the airport two weeks later. Students and chaperones join us on the reserve five days a week for hands-on education and conservation involvement in the way of guided hikes, wildlife monitoring, biodiversity sampling, training, and real-world application of biology, zoology, and ecological ideas taught in the classroom. Evenings are filled with in-house and guest speakers to cover topics such as ethics and conservation, language lessons, and cultural sessions. Over the weekend we provide additional cultural activities that are both informative and exciting such as boat tours of the bay and their resident wildlife, trips to the local museum, and a guided tour of the local cave paintings!

This opportunity takes place on a free roaming wildlife reserve. It is noted here that students in this program are not permitted to work or traverse on foot in dangerous game areas (where lions, elephants, rhinos, etc. are present). Any and all on foot work and teaching will take place in a separate area where no dangerous game are present.

# **STUDENT REQUIREMENTS**

- Must be group travel of at least three students
- Students must be 16-18 years old.
- Students must come with recommendation from an educator for their maturity, eagerness to learn, and self-discipline.
- Students must be able to hike on foot for day hikes.
- Students must be able to understand spoken and written English and must be able to communicate clearly in spoken English.
- Students must be able to follow direction.
- Students should have a determined work ethic, willing follow directives and instructions, and be open to individuals of varying cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, and religious beliefs.



# **FIELD WORK & RESEARCH**

*Please note that projects and activities vary depending on season, quotas, weather, animal behaviour, and reserve requirements.*

Participants in The Young Conservationist Program will be hands on in the field with conservation based tasks and be assisting in conservation as they learn. Students will be working with ethograms to create activity budgets of various species, assist in biodiversity studies of plant life (specifically Fynbos), monitor white rhinoceros behaviour to assist in studying group dynamics, and track elusive wildlife.

All work performed by the students assists in our overall conservation efforts and goals. Tasks and activities are assisting in the “bigger picture” and allow for contribution without a university degree! Days are divided between tasks like those listed above as well as hands on education. Learn to track wildlife and identify track and sign, how to identify plant species, how individual processes are involved in the cohesion of ecosystems, the way species have evolved to survive with specializations, and much more!

Duties will be divvied between work from a vehicle in dangerous game areas, and on foot work and guided hikes in a the designated “Hiking and Safe Zone Area” where no dangerous game are present. PLEASE NOTE: All field work is conducted on a free roaming wildlife reserve. At no time will participants be permitted to touch wildlife.

# ACCOMMODATION

All students and chaperones stay in a safe, gated accommodation facility at the heart of Mossel Bay. With views of the oceans and sunrises over the mountains it is a great place to stay after an eventful day in the bush! Walled and secured with gated access, security personnel, and CCTV cameras, you can feel safe knowing that both you and your possessions are in the best place possible.

Young Conservationist participants stay in shared dorms with members of their group (same sex only) and chaperones staying in the same facility but in separate rooms. The facility, in addition to safety, has an outdoor swimming pool, snack stall, free WiFi, lounge area/game room, housekeeping, and communal kitchen for extra snacks and drinks.

Staying in this hotspot location, we are within walking distance for our weekend activities to the local beach and shops, and are privy to staying in a highly sought after location! Private rooms are available on request and are subject to availability and additional cost.



# SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative schedule that varies based on academic requests and customization as well as where the students' help is needed. Below is an example of the standard Young Conservationist Experience.

**Day 1: Saturday-** Group arrives at George Airport (GRJ) in George, South Africa where they are met by our team and transported as a group to their accommodation roughly 30 minutes away. Depending on the time of arrival, lunch will be provided at a picnic area along the way. Once at the accommodation in Mossel Bay, everyone will be taken to their rooms and given a short break to settle in a relax from the travel, roughly 45 minutes. After this everyone will gather to be given a short briefing and a tour of the facility and its amenities. Concluding the briefing, students will be given free time to clean up from their travels and to get to know their home for the next two weeks. This gives our team time to get to know the chaperones and them the team. That evening we will have a traditional South African Braai around the fire and the students can get to know their supervisors and ask questions. Following the braai, students will be off to bed.

**Day 2: Sunday-** A dedicated day to safety and introductions. An in-depth Health and Safety Orientation is required for both students and chaperones where both reserve safety and safety in South Africa will be covered. The orientation will also cover project introductions and provide background on the necessity for these projects. After lunch the group goes for a guided walk around the town and down to "The Point", a rocky beach a few minutes walk from the accommodation where we often are privy to whales, dolphins, Cape fur seals, and rock hyraxes. After a hot dinner we will all settle in the lounge for a talk on the history of South Africa. A time to learn about the colonization of South Africa by Jan van Riebeeck, the development and subsequent fall of apartheid, and the culture of moderns day South Africa.

**Day 3-7:** Monday to Friday- Breakfast at 7:30 am, duties and “educationals” from 8:30 to 12:30 , a lunch break in the field and then continuing on the reserve until 4:30. Back to the accommodation to clean up and get ready for dinner from 6 to 7 pm followed by an evening lecture or workshop\*

**Day 8** Saturday- Students and chaperones go on a local boat tour of the bay for a marine and cultural education experience and after lunch explore the local museum. After dinner that evening, a chance for everyone to relax as we have a game/movie night.

**Day 9** Sunday- Students have the option to go on a horseback safari at a local wildlife reserve or take a surf lesson in the morning. That afternoon we head to the local caves for a tour of, what are estimated to be, the oldest cave paintings in South Africa by a local historian.

**Day 10-14:** Monday to Friday- Breakfast at 7:30 am, duties and “educational” from 8:30 to 12:30 , a lunch break in the field and then continuing on the reserve until 4:30. Back to the accommodation to clean up and get ready for dinner from 6 to 7 pm followed by an evening lecture or workshop\*.

**Day 15:** Saturday- transportation back to the airport for catch your first flight back home.



## **PROGRAM FEE**

### **Included**

Shared Dorm Rooms  
Wifi  
Housekeeping  
3 meals per day  
Conservation Fees

Program Related Transportation  
Airport Pick-Up (Start)  
Airport Return (End)

Nkozno Handbook  
Lectures/Workshops  
24-7 Standby/Emergency Team  
Research Equipment  
Safety Orientation  
Training  
Stipulated Tourism and Cultural Tours/Activities  
Drinking Water

### **Excluded**

Flights

Visas

Curios

Laundry

Drinks

Anything not Stated

## Packing List

### Definitely Bring

*Please pack necessary items and take into consideration that you will be in shared accommodation with limited closet space for clothing and personal items.*

- Neutral Coloured Clothing in Layers
  - Temperatures can reach 40 Celsius in Summer
  - Temperatures can drop to 10 Celsius in Winter (May to August)
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Hiking Boots/Shoes
- Sunscreen
- Sun Hat
- Gloves and Cap in Winter
- Coat (Winter)
- Bathing Suit
- Shower Towel
- Bath Towel
- Weekend/Lounge Clothes
- Backpack (for reserve) with recommended waterproof covering
- Notebook & Pen
- Reusable Shopping Bags (groceries)
- Binoculars
- Laptop
- Rain Coat
- South African Outlet Adapter

