

Glossary



WildlifeCampus

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WildlifeCampus Glossary

All fields of science have a vast amount of terminology and jargon, with biological science having more than most. Therefore, during our courses, you may encounter many new words. This very comprehensive list will assist you.

A

Aardvark	An unusual, nocturnal mammal, specialising in ant-eating.
Abdomen	Rear body segment of an insect, or the posterior section of any other animal.
Abiotic Factors	Non-living components of an ecosystem e.g. Soil, water, sunlight.
Abomasum	The fourth compartment of a ruminant's stomach. It is the animal's true stomach; it is glandular and produces enzymes.
Abscission	Shedding leaves.
Acacia	Typical thorn trees, generally with a flattened crown.
Acari	An Order in Class Arachnida, ticks and mites.
Acaricide	Any chemical applied to animals specifically for the removal of ticks.
Acclimation	Morphological and or physiological changes that an animal or plant undergoes in response to the physical changes of its habitat.
Acclimatisation	Changes which occur in the physical conditions of an animal after being exposed to different natural environments.
Adaptations	Flexible structures that facilitate living organism's survival under given conditions e.g., camouflage.
Aggressive Mimicry	The resemblance of a predator or parasite, to a harmless species to deceive potential prey.

Agonistic Behaviour	A broad class of behaviour patterns including all types of attack, threat, appeasement and fight.
Alates	Winged, reproductive termites.
Albinism	A state caused by the absence of pigmentation in the body covering of an organism. The animal usually appears white with pink eyes.
Alien (species)	Describes a species that does not occur naturally in an area e.g., the Australian black wattle, <i>Acacia mearnsii</i> in South Africa.
Alkaline	Describing a liquid (usually) that has a pH above 7. It is the opposite of acidic, may be known as 'basic' or 'base'.
Alkaloids	The largest class of secondary plant compounds(chemicals).
Allelochemistry	The influence that chemicals secreted by a plant has on other organisms.
Allo-grooming	Grooming behaviour involving more than one animal.
Allopatric	Having different areas of geographical distribution, possessing non-overlapping areas.
Allopatric speciation	Speciation that occurs when an ancestral population of an organism becomes separated by some form of geographic barrier.
Alluvial	Material that has been transported by flowing water.
Altricial	Requiring care or nursing after birth. At birth, these animals are usually helpless, usually with eyes and ears closed and partially naked.
Altricial	Requiring care or nursing after birth. At birth these animals are usually helpless, usually with eyes and ears closed and partially naked.
Altruism	Act of assisting another animal at the expense of your own health or circumstances.

Alum	A substance used in licks to control tick infestation.
Amber	Fossilised tree resin.
Amphibia	The Class to which frogs and toads belong.
Amphibious	An organism that spends portions of its life both in and out of the water, e.g., hippopotamus.
Anaerobic	This refers to an environment devoid of oxygen. It is also frequently associated with a group of animals, for example, anaerobic bacteria, which describes bacteria that live in oxygen-free environments.
Anaphylaxis	The advanced state of allergic reaction characterised by cardiovascular distress, anaphylactic shock.
Anaplasmosis	Also called "gallsickness". A protozoal disease-causing fever and anaemia in cattle. Wildlife is generally carriers of the disease.
Anemia	Pale looking.
Angiosperm	Seed protected within an ovary; division of seed-bearing plants.
Annual	A plant that completes its lifecycle from germination to death in only one season.
Antbear	See aardvark.
Antennae	Sensory appendages found on the head of many arthropods specifically insects. Also known as 'feelers'.
Anterior	Toward the front.
Anthelminthic	A product which is used to remove worms from the digestive tract.
Anthrax	A highly contagious bacterial disease of wild and domestic animals.

Anthropomorphic	Human-centred; assigning human characteristics to non-human species.
Anti-venom	Drug administered intravenously to counter the effects of envenomation by snakes, scorpions, spiders and insects.
Antibiosis	The release of chemicals from the root of a plant that inhibits the growth of other plants adjacent to it.
Antioxidant	A chemical that destroys free radicals.
Antiparasitides	Products applied externally to animals to control tick infestations.
Apex	Tip of a leaf, or the terminal point.
Aphelion	The furthestmost point of a planet's orbit from the sun.
Apis	This is the Generic name for bees in the Family Apidae. "Api" is from the Latin for bees, thus apiology, the study of bees, apiculture, the ecology of bees etc.
Aposematic	Warning colouration. Usually contrasting yellow, red or orange against black, it advertises the fact that the organism is either poisonous, toxic, distasteful or harmful in some manner, e.g. Bees.
Aquatic	Living in water.
Arachnida	The Class to which spiders, scorpions, ticks and mites belong.
Arachnophobia	The fear of spiders.
Arboreal	Living in or adapted to living in trees.
Areola	The apex of a mollusc shell.
Argasid	A group of ticks representing those tick species which have soft bodies.

Arthropod	An animal that has a segmented body and jointed legs and is covered in a hard exoskeleton, e.g., arachnids, myriapods, insects.
Arthropoda (arthropod)	An animal that has a segmented body and jointed legs and is covered in a hard exoskeleton, e.g. Arachnids, myriapods, insects.
Artiodactyla	Even-toed ungulates. Members of this mammalian order are characterised by either two or four weight-bearing toes on each foot. Examples include the antelope and warthogs.
Aspect	An object's fixed position in relation to direction E.g. North facing
Assimilation	The transformation or incorporation of a substance by organisms; absorption and conversion of energy and nutrient intake into constituents of an organism.
Association	A natural unit of vegetation characterised by its composition and often dominated by a species.
Astrology	Study of 12 principle star constellations and their relevance to mankind.
Astronavigation	The use of star constellations, the moon or other cosmic features to determine position and direction. Used by certain birds in long-distance migration
Astronomy	Study of stars, moons, planets, galaxies and other cosmic phenomena
Ataxic	The failure of muscular coordination, also known as ataxia or ataxy
Atmosphere	The layer of gas surrounding the earth
Autecology	Ecology of an individual organism or species
Autotomy	Voluntary breaking off part of the body by an animal to escape predation
Autotrophic	Self-nourishing, e.g., photosynthesis in green plants

Aves	The Class of animals distinguished by feathers and wings
Avifauna	Birds
Avivorous	Feeding on/ having a diet of birds.

B

Babesiosis	A protozoal disease transmitted by ticks and which infects the red blood cells of animals, causing fever and anaemia.
Backburn	A fire that is lit so that it burns into the wind, and therefore burns slowly. These fires are very hot and destructive. Also known as a hot burn
Bacteria	Simple microscopic organisms that live in soil, water, organic matter, or in the bodies of plants and animals
Baculum	An elongated body structure found in the penises of all carnivores except Family Hyaenidae. The purpose is to prolong copulation
Baobab	A very large and very long-lived tree indigenous to Africa. Scientific name: <i>Adansonia digitata</i> . This tree is thoroughly examined in the wildlifecampus Botany Module. It is also the WLC logo.
Barbicules	Tiny hooks that assist in keeping birds feathers together
Barbs	Hooks that assist in keeping birds feathers together. Assisted by barbicules
Batesian mimicry	When a non-harmful organism mimics a harmful organism E.g. A hoverfly that looks very like a honeybee
BECVOL	Biomass Estimates from Canopy Volume: a computer program used to calculate the amount of browse available to animals
Benchmark	A reference site subjectively chosen to represent a veld in excellent condition
Besnoitiosis	"Elephant skin disease" protozoal disease-causing skin deformations in cattle, wildlife tend to be carriers.
Biennials	Plants that have a two - year life cycle
Bilateral Symmetry	The symmetrical arrangement of a body so that only one plane of dissection will result in two mirror-image halves

Biltong	Dried and seasoned meat. Known as 'jerky'
Biodiversity	Describing the diversity of living organisms within a defined community or location, with reference to their numbers
Biogeography	The study of the geographical distribution of organisms, both past and present
Biology	The study of living things
Biomass	The total weight of all the organisms in an ecosystem or in a portion of it
Biome	A region or set of regions having characteristic climatic or geographical conditions which determine specific species composition. E.g. Savanna, forest, grassland.
Biosphere	The entire living component of the planet; it covers almost all the earth and the atmosphere
Biotic Factors	That part of the total environment of an organism which is formed by its interrelationships with other organisms
Bipedal	Walking on two legs
Biuret	A non-protein nitrogen source included in licks as a protein supplement
Bloat	A condition whereby gases caused by ruminating become trapped inside an animal, and the animal begins to swell. The condition may lead to death
Block burning	A burning programme whereby a fixed pattern of different blocks of vegetation are burnt regularly.
Blousuurvergiftiging	Prussic acid poisoning
Bog	A wetland ecosystem characterised by the accumulation of peat, acid conditions, and the dominance of sphagnum moss

Bolsters	Humps placed at angles in roads to prevent water from collecting on the road surface
Boma	An enclosure
Bond pair	Strongly attached male and female life partners, found in many bird and mammal species
Bone meal	Crushed bone, used in supplementary feeding
Boreal Forest	Needle-leaved evergreen or coniferous forest bordering sub-polar regions; also called Taiga
Boss	The thickened central portion of the horns of ungulate species
Bottleneck Effect	Genetic phenomenon referring to a population of animals which have developed from a small basal population
Botulism	A bacterial disease characterised by progressive paralysis
Bovine Malignant Catarrhal Fever	A viral disease causing nasal discharge and frequently death. Wildebeest tend to be carriers of the disease
Breeding	The generating, bearing and raising of offspring
Browse	The edible leaves of trees and shrubs
Browse unit	A kudu weighing 140 kg that only eats leaves (browse)
Browser	Any animal that eats predominantly browse material
Browser Unit (BU)	A unit of measure used to equate all browsers. Defined as a kudu of 140 kg which browses exclusively
Brucellosis	A bacterial disease which causes animals to suffer abortions
Bryophytes	A group of no vascular plants e.g. Moss and liverworts

Bulk feeder/grazer	An animal that consumes a large amount of grass and does so without selecting specific species
Bulk Grazer	A grazing animal that is non-selective regarding species and length of grass grazed
Bush Encroachment	An increase in shrub, thicket or tree growth to the detriment of valuable grazing areas. Thus, may be caused by overgrazing

C

Caecum	A specialised portion of the lower / large intestine
Calcification	Process of soil formation characterised by an accumulation of calcium in the lower horizons
Calliphoridae	The fly family representing the metallic blue and green coloured flies which feed on carcasses
Calving rate	The rate of juveniles born to a game population per year after all births. It is expressed as a % of the population
Camouflage	The way that an animal's skin colour and texture blend with the surroundings
Canine	The tooth immediately posterior to the incisors
Cannibalistic	The practice of eating members of the same or similar species, e.g. File snakes
Capture myopathy	An unnatural and life-threatening state; characterised by a variety of seemingly unrelated symptoms caused by various od capture-related factors; significantly stress.
Carapace	The upper portion of a Chelonia shell
Carcinogen	A chemical substance that is linked to causing cancer
Carnassial (teeth)	The last upper premolar and first lower molar that fit together in a shearing surface. A defining characteristic of carnivores
Carnivore	Meat eater, either predator or scavenger
Carrion	Dead or decaying bodies of animals
Carrying Capacity (ecological)	The number of animal units an area can support

Caste (system)	A division of labour within a social insect society, i.e. Workers, soldiers, guards, nursery workers e.g. Termites, ants and certain bee species
Catalogue auctions	Selling game in an auction format, animals are not on display.
Catena	A soil profile and slope which has developed from a single parent material from crest to valley
Cecum	A portion of a mammalian colon
Cell	The smallest unit of living matter
Cellulose	A form of plant tissue, difficult to digest
Cephalisation	The concentration of sense organs, nervous control, etc., at the anterior end of the body, forming a head and brain, both during evolution and in the course of an embryo's development.
Cephalothorax	The fusion of the head and thorax of arachnids
Character Convergence	Evolution of similar appearance or behaviour in unrelated species
Character Divergence	Evolution of behavioural, physiological or morphological differences among species occupying the same area, brought about by selective pressure of competition
Chelicerae	Mouthparts of spider's 'fangs'
Chelonia	Reptilian order containing the tortoises, terrapins and turtles
Chemotropism	The growth of a plant in response to chemical stimulus
Chilopoda	Centipedes
Chitin	The tough component of an exoskeleton

Chitons	The common name for molluscs belonging to the Class: Polyplacophora
Chlorophyll	A chemical found in the leaves of plants that facilitate photosynthesis and provide leaves with their green colouration
Chordata	Animals with a backbone/spine
Chromatophores	Specialised skin cells that produce different colour pigments
Classification	Any method of arranging living organisms into a systematic order
Climax Community	A plant community, where no significant change in species composition has taken place within the previous 500 years
Cloaca	A common orifice for the release of digestive, excretory and reproductive material and waste
Co-evolution	Joint evolution of two or more non-interbreeding species where the evolution of one species in the relationship is partially dependent on the evolution of the other.
Co-existence	Two or more species living together in the same habitat, usually with some form of competitive interaction
Coccidiosis	A protozoal disease characterised by severe diarrhoea in especially captive animals
Coleoptera	The order of insects which includes beetles
Colloid	Tiny particles suspended in a continuous medium
Colostrum	The first milk that a young animal receives from its mother, rich in antibodies, protein and energy,
Columella	The central pillar on which the whorls of a mollusc's shell are deposited

Commensalism	A relationship between two species where the relationship is beneficial to one but is neutral or of no benefit to the other
Community	Different populations that live in a common area and affect one another
Competition	The demand for organisms within a community for the same resources, when this is in short supply
Competitive Exclusion	This hypothesis deals with the issue that when two or more species coexist using the same limited resource, one species must displace or exclude the other
Compound Eyes	The normal eyes of adult insects, consisting of many facets
Compound Leaf	A single leaf that consists of many leaflets
Condensed tannins	Tannins which form complexes with proteins, thus hindering fermentation and digestion
Conservation	The structured use and planned management of the earth's natural resources
Conspecific	Of the same species
Consumptive use of game	Hunting and fishing
Contact carrier	An animal which has not developed symptoms after exposure to a disease, but is a source of infection
Convalescent carrier	An animal that has recovered from clinical symptoms but is still a source of infection
Convergent Evolution	The development of similar characteristics in different species living in different areas but under similar environmental conditions
Coppicing	The controlled removal of vegetation in response to a habitat management plan

Coprophagy	Ingesting faeces and other waste products
Copulation	Act of mating whereby the male's sperm is deposited into the female's reproductive organs
Corridor Disease	Theileriosis
Corynebacterium	A group of bacteria species causing infections through wounds
Courtship	Ritualised activity between male and female conspecifics as a prelude to mating
Crepuscular	Active at sunrise and sunset
Cropping	The steady removal of a predetermined number of animals over an extended period, usually in response to a habitat management plan
Crown	The shape made by the upper branches and leaves of a tree
Crustacean	A group of Arthropods having a hard-outer shell, are usually aquatic and are gill breathing, e.g. Shrimps, crabs etc
Culling	Controlling game populations by shooting
Cursorial	Species that wander around in search of prey
Cyclone	The term for a hurricane in the Southern Hemisphere
Cytauxzoonosis	Protozoal disease like theileriosis also called East Coast Fever
Cytotoxic	The venom type that causes localised tissue damage at the site of envenomation, usually associated with intense pain and marked swelling.

D

Danckwerts Equation	The equation used to calculate grazing capacity based on veld condition and rainfall.
Death Rate	The percentage of individuals in a population dying in a specified time interval
Deciduous	Trees or shrubs that lose their leaves every year
Decomposer	An organism that obtains energy from the breakdown of dead organic matter to more simple substances; more precisely refers to bacteria and fungi
Decreaser	A grass species that is dominant in good veld but is replaced by other species when the area is under- or overgrazed.
Defoliation	Plants losing their leaves
Density Dependent	Varying in relation to population density
Density Independent	Unaffected by population density
Desiccation	Drying out, losing all moisture content
Detritivore	An organism that feeds on dead organic matter; usually applies to detritus feeding organisms other than bacteria and fungi
Dextral	Right-handed or pertaining to the right
Diapause	A period of arrested growth and activity in which metabolism is greatly decreased; usually seasonal in nature and common among insects
Digestible energy	Energy made available to the animal through the digestion process
Digestion	Process of fermentation and uptake of nutrients in the digestive system.

Digit	A finger or toe in mammals
Digitigrade	An animal that walks on its toes, characteristic of all dogs and cats
Dimorphic	A species that has two distinctly different body forms, most frequently due to different genders i.e. Sexual dimorphism. E.g. Humans are distinctly sexually dimorphic, zebra are not.
Dioecious	A plant species that has separate flowers for each sex, i.e. It has male flowers and female flowers
Diplopoda	Millipedes
Diptera	The order which includes flies
Dispersal	The spreading of seeds by wind, water, animals etc
Dispersion	Distribution of organisms in a given area
Displacement Activity	The performance of a behaviour pattern different from its normal functional context of behaviour
Display	A technique used by birds to send a signal to another bird by means of a pose, movement, sound, or combination of these, to get a response
Distemper	A viral disease, causing flu-like symptoms in canids
Distribution	The area in which a given species is likely to be found
Disturbed Area	An area that has been dug up, altered by man, or heavily overgrazed
Diurnal	Active during the day
Diversity	The difference, the range of species in a given area

Dominance hierarchy	A social system whereby animals of the same species are ranked, and behave accordingly
Dominant	A population possessing ecological dominance in a given community and thereby governing the type and abundance of other species in their community
Donga	Hole of various dimensions usually due to the act of erosion
Dormant	The state of cessation of growth and suspended biological activity during which life is maintained
Dorsal	On or referring to the back
Drift	The term is given to soils which develop from previously weathered material
Dronksiekte (drunk disease)	Plant poisoning disease with symptoms of severe shivering in animals
Dung	The faeces or droppings of herbivores
Duplex	Type of soil where sandy topsoil overlies a swelling clay
Dynamic	Constantly changing
Dynamic equilibrium	Regarding plants, a community where change is constant, but the effects are not cumulative.

E

Ecdysis	Emergence from a cocoon or pupa.
Echo-location	Used by bats; the sending and receiving of ultra-high frequency sound emissions to determine the exact location of an object or organism
Ecological Capacity	The ability of vegetation to support animals and maintain them in a healthy and reproductive state, without the deterioration of the vegetation in the long-term
Ecological Index Method	A method used to determine the veld condition of an area, using the ecological status of grasses
Ecological Niche	That portion of habitat that a specific species has become uniquely adapted to.
Ecological Status Class	Classification of grasses based on their reaction to grazing pressure.
Ecology	The study of the inter-relationships between all organisms and their environment
Ecosystem	A definable ecological area in nature, consisting of all living and non-living components
Ecotone	A boundary between two plant communities of a major rank
Ecotourism	The purposeful travel to a specific location to experience natural phenomena and local culture
Ecozone	An area with similar geology, rainfall, land shape and therefore its own unique combination of plants and animals
Ectoparasites	A parasite that lives on the outside of an organism
Ectothermy (ic)	A state of being dependent on the environmental temperature for body heating. These organisms exercise thermoregulation to keep their temperature at the optimum level

Edaphic Factors	Relating to soil
Edentates	The Order of mammals representing the sloths, armadillos and anteaters
Effluent	A substance that flows out, e.g. Pollution or waste materials into rivers or seas
Egestion	The elimination of undigested food material through the mouth
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
Eluviation	The movement of soil material from one horizon to another
Endangered	Under threat of becoming extinct
Endemic	An animal or plant to a given area
Endoparasite	A parasite that lives inside an organism
Endoskeleton	A skeleton situated interior to the muscles, e.g. All vertebrates
Endothermy (ic)	The regulation of internal body temperature independent of the external temperature
Energy Flow	The flux of energy originating with the process of photosynthesis from sunlight through to plants, herbivores, etc
Energy Method	A technique used to determine grazing capacity
Entomology	The study of insects
Envenomation	The transmission of venom into an organism, usually through the venomous animal's bite or sting
Environment	The external conditions (soil, water, air, etc) and other organisms surrounding a living thing

Environmental Audit	The assessment of how well an environmental body is performing at its allotted task
Epidemiology	The study of a disease as it progresses through a population
Epidermis	The outer most layer of an organism
Epiphragm	A mucous layer secreted by the pedal glands of terrestrial Molluscs, covering its foot and shell opening, preventing desiccation
Epiphyte	Plants that grow while attached to another species of plant to gain a more beneficial position, e.g. Tree orchids
Epoch	A very long segment of time
Equilibrium Species	A species whose population exists in equilibrium with the resources and at a stable density
Erosion	An ongoing natural process caused by weathering, transporting and depositing of the earth's surface by wind, water, other natural forces or human and animal influence
Escarpment	The Eastern Transvaal escarpment is the steep break between the Highveld and the Lowveld
Esophagus	Food pipe. The structure that directs food from the mouth to the stomach
Estimation Method	A technique used to determine grazing capacity
Estrus	See oestrus
Estuary	The location where a river flows into the ocean and the segment of that river that is affected by the ocean, in terms of tidal and saline influence
Ethology	The study of animal behaviour

Etiolated	The loss of chlorophyll from a plant due to it being blocked from the sun for a prolonged period Grass yellowing = etiolated grass
Eutrophic	A term applied to a body of water with high nutrient content and high productivity
Evapotranspiration	The amount of water lost via evaporation and transpiration from an area
Evergreen	A plant that does not shed its leaves with a change of season
Evolution	A theory which maintains that organisms have their origin in previously existing forms
Exfoliation	The removal of a surface layer from an object or organism
Exoskeleton	The hard outer shell of an insect or other invertebrates
Exotic	Not indigenous, introduced from abroad
Extant	Not extinct, still living
Extinction	The dying out of a species

F

Facultative anaerobes	Bacteria that can live in both oxygen-rich and oxygen-poor environments
Faecal energy	The energy lost during defecation, heat and undigested food
Faeces	Dung or droppings
False hooves	Protrusions on the legs of some ungulate species above the fetlock, they are the remnants of fused and reduced leg bones
Fauna	All animal life
Fecundity	The number of offspring or eggs produced
Fecundity (fecund)	A measure of the fertility of an organism. A highly fertile individual is said to be very fecund.
Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)	A viral disease affecting felines. It is like the HIV strain but with less severe symptoms.
Feral	Wild, escaped from domestication and returned to a wild state
Fermentation	The breakdown of food in the rumen or caecum.
Fermentation heat	Energy lost as heat during the fermentation process.
Fertilisation	The combining of female and male genetic material to reproduce a new individual
Fertility	The potential to produce offspring
Fibrosity	The fibre content of plant material
Fire break	A section of land, wide enough to halt the spread of fire. The break may be artificial such as a road, or a strip of vegetation may be back-burnt to produce a temporary fire break

Fire mosaic	A burning programme where a single fire is started in a random area and is left to burn itself out. This is an attempt to simulate natural (lightning) fires.
Fitness	The genetic contribution of an individual's descendants to future generations
Flatulence	The gas given off via the rectum
Flavenoids	The largest group of secondary chemicals (toxins) produced by plants. Includes tannin
Fledgling	A juvenile bird that is ready to leave its parents nest
Flehmen	An act performed by many species of mammals whereby an adult male sniffs the vulva and urine of a female to test if she is in oestrus. Some females also perform this ritual
Flora	All plant life
Flux	A flow of energy from a source to a destination
Fomites	Inanimate objects on which pathogens can be conveyed e.g. Faeces
Food Chain	The flow of energy from plants to herbivores to carnivores
Food Web	The interlocking pattern formed by a series of interconnecting food chains
Forb	Any herbs other than a grass
Forcípules	Appendages on the first segment on centipedes that convey venom to the tip of the animal's sharp claws
Foregut fermenters	Ruminants. Animals that 'chew the cud'
Formation	A classification of vegetation based on dominant life forms

Fossil	An impression left in hard rock of the shape, size and texture of a once-living organic organism or part of an organism, plant or animal
Fossil Fuel	Coal, oil or natural gas
Fossorial	Adapted to digging / an underground lifestyle
Free radicle	Harmful oxygen-containing compound
Frugivore	An animal that eats fruit
Fuel load	The relative mass of vegetation to be burnt
Fungus	Plants that do not contain chlorophyll e.g., mildew, mould, and mushrooms
Fusiform	Cigar-shaped
Fynbos biome	A very large group of related species (9700) only endemic to the Southern Cape region of South Africa

G

Gabion	A wire mesh framework filled with rocks; used to restore erosion gullies
Game auction	Selling game at a traditional auction with the animals on display
Game cubes	A type of supplemental feed
Ganglia	Primitive brain or neural network
Gas energy	The energy lost from the animal in the form of heat
Gasterophilidae	A fly family representing those species which lays eggs in the coat/hide of animals
Gastro-intestinal tract	A combination of interconnecting organs and structures from the oesophagus to the anus. The path of food from ingestion to excretion
Geeldikkop (sunlight sickness)	A disease affecting animals ingesting plants with chemicals which cause photo-sensitivity in animals.
Gene	The part of a chromosome which determines the individual's characteristics
Gene Pool	The total of the genes in a population of organisms
Genotype	The sum total of the hereditary factors of an organism
Geology	The study of the history and life of the earth as it is recorded in rocks
Geomorphology	The study of relief features of the earth's surface
Geophagia	The eating of soil by herbivorous animals
Geotropism	The growth of a plant in response to gravity

Gestation	Pregnancy; the period from conception to birth for viviparous animals
Gifblaarsiekte (poison leaf sickness)	A disease affecting the central nervous system of carnivores and the heart of ruminants
Glycosides	Substances found in the leaves of plants, which may be toxic to animals in large quantities
Gnathosoma	The mouthparts of a tick
Gonads	Reproductive organs of animal species
Gousiekte (quick sickness)	A disease affecting ruminants which ingest dwarf medlar plants. Animals die rapidly from chronic heart seizure
Graminivorous	Subsisting on grass
Granivores	Organisms that feed on seed
Grass sward	A clump of grass
Grazers	Animals which consume mostly grass
Grazing Capacity	The maximum number of productive animals that can be maintained on an area without causing deterioration of the veld condition
Greenhouse Effect	The effect of increased heating caused by the absorption of radiation (heat) by carbon dioxide in our atmosphere
Gregarious	Living together in colonies or groups
Gregarious species	A species that prefer to congregate in groups
Growth rate	The increase in the size of a population from one year to the next expressed as a % of the population

Gustatorial	Pertaining to taste
Gymnosperm	Unprotected seed/division of seed bearing plants

H

Habitat	The kind of place in relation to vegetation and climate in which a given species of animal lives. Generally, a localised area
Haemotoxic	Type of venom that causes blood to stop clotting, associated with internal haemorrhaging
Harem	A group of females (ungulates) herded and protected by a dominant male animal
Harvesting rate	The number of animals harvested from a game population expressed as a % of the entire population
Head burn	A fire that is lit in such a manner as to burn with the wind. The fires move very rapidly and are generally not very destructive. Also known as a cool burn
Heartwater	A disease transmitted by ticks causing nervous symptoms and death in especially springbok and eland
Helminthes	Parasitic worms infecting the internal organs of animals
Hemicellulose	A type of plant tissue, difficult to digest
Hemimetabolous	Incomplete metamorphosis (in insects)
Hemipenes	A paired copulatory organ (males)
Herbicides	Chemicals used to control the growth of shrubs and trees
Herbivore	An animal that eats plants
Heredity	The study of how characteristics are passed from parent to offspring
Hermaphrodite	An animal that contains both male and female reproductive organs

Heterogeneity	The variation in species, soils, etc. Evident in an area
Heterotrophic	Unable to photosynthesise, eats other organisms
Heteroxenic	A parasite having two hosts
Hibernate	An animal that sleeps through the winter
Highveld	The region in South Africa, 2000m (6600 ft) above sea level containing the Gauteng Province (Johannesburg, Pretoria)
Hindgut fermenters	Herbivores that do not ruminate. Non-ruminants. Fermentation and digestion occurs in the animals single compartmentalised stomach and intestines
Hippoboscidae	An ectoparasitic fly family which display the same ecology as lice
Holism	A point of view that links everything together
Holometabolous	Complete metamorphosis (in insects)
Home Range	The area over which an animal normally travels in pursuit of its routine activities
Homeothermy	The regulation of constant body temperature by physiological means
Homogenous Vegetation Units	An artificial segment of vegetation that is comprised of a single form of dominant vegetation. Hvu are used for habitat analysis
Hormone	An internal chemical message within an organism
Host	A plant or animal that harbours a parasite
Host community	A local community (often rural) that is close to an ecotourism destination
Humification	The process by which humus is formed

Humus	Compost, decaying vegetable matter
Hybrid	The resultant offspring of a successful mating between two different species. E.g. Zebra and donkey hybridise to produce a zonkey.
Hydrology	The study of properties, distribution and circulation of water
Hydrolysable tannins	Tannins found in the vacuoles of leaves which inhibit digestive enzymes of herbivores
Hydromorphism	The formation of soils because of excessive water conditions
Hydrophilic	An organism that is attracted to water / has an affinity to water
Hydrophobic	An organism that is repelled by water
Hydrophyte	A plant suited to wet conditions
Hypersensitivity	An over-sensitivity to certain stimuli and / or chemicals. Example, bee-stings
Hypodermid	Type of fly larvae which burrow under the skin

I	
Ichthyologist	A scientist that studies fish
Igneous	Rock of volcanic origin e.g., dolomite
Illuviation	The movement of soil material into a horizon
Immobilised	A drugged animal which is unaware of its surroundings; the animal loses consciousness and can be handled easily
Immobilising drugs	A drug whereby an animal is rendered immobile and unconscious. Used in game capture
Immunology	The study of the immune system and the resistance it presents to infection
Imprinting	When an animal has become fixated onto another organism, with the assumption that the organism is its parent
Inbreeding	Breeding, in animals that are closely related genetically. A frequent cause of abnormalities
Increaser I	A grass species that is dominant in poor veld and which increases when a veld is under grazed.
Increaser IIa	A grass species which increases under conditions of light overgrazing.
Increaser IIb	A grass species that increases under conditions of medium overgrazing
Increaser IIc	A grass species that increases under conditions of heavy overgrazing
Incubation	The act of keeping eggs warm until they hatch
Indicator Species	Organisms that live or grow only in specific conditions and environments. They indicate the health of their environment

Inflorescence	The flowering parts of grass plants
Infrasound	Ultrasonic made by elephants for communication of long distances
Inguinal	A reference to the groin region, often associated with a gland
Inorganic	Of mineral origin, not alive
Insecticide	An artificial chemical for killing insects
Insectivorous	Subsisting entirely or mainly on insects
Insolation	Incoming solar radiation / an amount of energy received from the sun
Interspecific	Between different individuals/ species/ groups / communities / etc
Intraspecific	Between the same individuals /species / groups / communities / etc
Invaders	Alien grass species
Invasive Plants	Plants that are usually not endemic to an area, and can outcompete local resident species
Invertebrates	An animal without a backbone
Ionophore	An antibiotic used to improve growth in livestock and prevent coccidiosis
Ischium	A skeletal structure on the hindquarters of ungulates
Isoptera	The order which includes termites
Isotope	A variation of a chemical element which differs slightly in its atomic structure from other atoms of the same element

Ixodid

A group of tick species representing those with hard or shield-like bodies

J

Jaundice	An abnormal condition characterised by the deposition of bile pigment in the skin.
Juvenile	Not yet adult

K

K	The symbol for Ecological capacity
Keratin	A hard-natural substance that is the main component in hair, nails, hooves and horns
Keratinisation	Hardening, usually of the skin
Keystone species	A species that is fundamental in the functioning in a specific ecosystem. Should that species be removed or die that whole ecosystem would be highly disrupted
Kleptoparasite	Small spiders that live on the webs of larger species and steal (portions of) small prey that gets trapped in the web. E.g. Mercury spiders.

L

Labdiognathous	Web-spinning spider species
Labial	Pertaining to the lips
Lactation	To produce milk for purposes of suckling young
Lactroductism	The advanced effects of a certain type of spider bite
Large Stock Unit	An animal that weighs 450 kg, whose mass increases by 500g daily on a vegetation diet with a digestibility of 55%
Large Stock Unit (LSU)	A bovine animal of 450 kg (992 lbs), increasing in mass by 500 g (1.1 lbs) daily on grazing with a digestibility of 55 %.
Larva	An insect from the time it leaves the egg up until it changes into a pupa
Latex	The milky liquid found in the leaves and stems of certain plants
Leaching	The moving of nutrients and minerals through the soil profile by the action of water
Lentic	Pertaining to standing water such as lakes and ponds
Lichen	A plant made up of algae and a fungus growing in a symbiotic relationship
Lick	See Mineral Lick or Supplementary Feeding
Light year	The distance one would travel if you could move at the speed of light for 365 days in a straight line
Lignification	Grasses becoming older and producing lignin (plant cell type) making them harder and less palatable
Limiting Factor	A condition defining whether an organism will survive in each place or not, e.g., availability of water

Lithological Discontinuity	The process which gives rise to a soil profile consisting of soils originating from different parent materials
Lithosphere	A portion of the earth consisting of soil and rock
Live sales	The selling of live game for establishing new populations or introducing genetic material into existing populations.
Liverworts	Plants without vascular conducting tissue (no xylem or phloem tubules). They are in the same group as mosses and look similar.
Longevity	Life-span
Lotic	Pertaining to flowing water
Lowveld	The North-Eastern region of South Africa, encompassing the Mpumalanga and Northern Provinces (Kruger National Park and the land to the west of it extending for 400 Km (250 miles).
Loxodonta	The Generic name for elephants. From the Latin 'loxos' meaning a lozenge and 'donta' meaning tooth. The name refers to the lozenge-shaped ridges on the molar (chewing) teeth of elephants.
LSU	Large stock unit / livestock unit
Lucerne	An artificially-grown form of hay
Lumbar vertebrae	Pertaining to the lower spine

M

Macro-climate	The physical climatic conditions that affect a large area i.e. The macro-climate of the Lowveld
Macro-elements	Elements that animals require in moderate quantity
Maggot	The leg-less larva of a fly
Maise	Corn
Malaria	A disease transmitted by mosquitoes. Symptoms include a high fever, aching joints, headache, nausea and shivering. Three million people die from this disease annually in Africa
Mammal	An animal that gives birth to live young, and suckles its young
Management (habitat)	The efforts of humans to oversee nature wisely to conserve it
Mandibles	Set of biting mouthparts of insects
Marsupial	A pouched mammal endemic to Australia
Matriarch	A female that is the leader of her herd, pride, flock
Mealie	Maise (corn)
Melanism	A state in which too much melanin pigment is formed, resulting in a black coloured population of animals e.g. Gabar goshawk
Mesophyte	A plant suited to temperate living conditions which are neither too wet nor too dry.
Metabolisable energy	Energy available to the animal after the energy lost in the urine and gas products is subtracted.
Metabolism	Chemical reactions that take place inside living organisms

Metabolites	Chemicals
Metamorphosis	A series of morphological changes that insects undergo that gradually changes them from a juvenile to adult form and allows them to become reproductively active
Micro elements	Elements that animals require, but in minute quantities only
Micro-climate	The physical environmental condition confined to a very small area or location i.e. The micro-climate of a woodland dormouse hole, wild dog den or termite mound
Micro-flora	Microorganisms living in the digestive tract
Microbes	Microscopic organisms
Midden	A regularly used site for depositing of dung
Migration	The movement of animals over long distances, associated with birds and certain ungulates
Mimicry	The resemblance of one organism to another. Taking on another organism's colour, vocalisation, action or attribute.
Mineral Lick	An artificially produced nutritional material used to supplement natural grazing of wildlife. Licks may be nutritive, salt or medicinal
Mites	Tiny ecto- or endo-parasites which may be herbivorous
Mixed Feeder	Animals that both browse (leaves) and graze (grass)
Mixed veld	A transitional zone between sweet and sour veld, suitable for grazing 6 - 10 months of the year depending on location
Mollusc	Bilaterally symmetrical unsegmented invertebrates consisting of a head, muscular foot and visceral hump e.g. Snails
Monoecious	A plant possessing both male and female organs in the same flower

Monogamy	Mating of an animal with only one member of the opposite sex at a time
Monotreme	An egg-laying mammal. Only two species exist, both endemic to Australia, the echidna and duck-billed platypus
Morbidity	See Morbidity rate
Morbidity Rate	Refers to the percentage of animals infected by a disease but not dying from the disease
Moribund	A reference to grass that has not been utilised by either fire or grazing. It is nutrient-poor.
Morphology	The physical external features of an organism
Mortality Rate	The percentage of animals which die because of a disease or activity
Moult	The shedding of skin, hair or feathers
Muscular dystrophy	A muscular disease causing the animal incoordination, restricted movement, leading to muscle damage
Musth	The period when male elephants are seeking mates. During this time, they are often aggressive. For a fuller description, please do the wildlifecampus Free Lesson on elephants
Mutualism	A non-obligatory relationship in which both organisms benefit
Myiasis	The presence of fly maggots on a body or carcass
Myremecophagic	Subsists on a diet of ants (Hymenoptera) or termites (Isoptera)
Myriapoda	A defunct zoological term that unites all Arthropoda that have elongated bodies, multiple legs and a distinct head e.g. Millipedes and centipedes

N

Nagana	"Sleeping sickness" a protozoal disease transmitted by tsetse flies causing fever and anaemia in cattle, wildlife tend to be carriers.
Native species	A species that has always been found (endemic) to a specific area
Natural licks	A naturally formed mineral-rich reef in soil, usually with a high salt content
Natural Selection	Survival of the offspring of the fittest
Necropsy	An autopsy
Necrosis	The dying off of tissue, associated with injury or envenomation
Neosporosis	A protozoal disease like toxoplasmosis, but differs in that dogs, not cats form part of its life cycle
Nestling	A newly hatched chick (bird) that is unable to leave the nest yet
Nett energy	Amount of energy available to the animal for growth, lactation, cellular metabolism etc.
Neurotoxic	A type of venom that acts on the central nervous system associated with cardio-vascular distress and collapse
Niche (ecological)	A very specific set of conditions within a habitat, specifically suited to the requirements of a single species
Nocturnal	Organisms that are most active at night
Nomadic	An animal that moves from one location to the next frequently
Non-consumptive use of game	Ecotourism, photographic safaris
NPN	Non-proteinaceous nitrogen.

**Nutrient
metabolism heat**

The heat produced through the metabolic process, causing a loss of energy

O

Ocelli	Simple eyes found on many invertebrates. Their function is to detect light and movement, but not shape or form. They are usually found in clusters of 4 – 6
Oestridae	Family of flies and larvae which lay eggs on the eyes or in the nasal passages of animals
Oestrus	The period when a female will mate for fertilisation
Olfactory	Pertaining to the sense of smell
Oligarchy	A social system dominated by several large males e.g. A baboon troop
Omasum	The third compartment of a ruminant stomach. It is a muscular segment that mixes food mechanically
Omnivore	An organism showing tendencies to eat both plant and animal matter
Oocysts	The infective spore stage in the life cycle of protozoa
Ootheca	A packet of invertebrate eggs. Usually regarding insects
Organic	Once living or alive
Orthognathous	Spiders that actively move around hunting. They can but do not spin webs for prey capture
Osmosis	The movement of a liquid across a selectively permeable membrane
Osteophagia	The practice of herbivores consuming bones
Osteophagy	The practice of eating bones, where the behaviour is not common. E.g. Antelope eating bones

Oviduct	A portion of the female reproductive system
Oviparous	Egg-laying
Ovipositor	An anterior (rear) appendage of female Arthropoda that is used to lay eggs into exact locations. It may be modified into a stinging apparatus e.g. Wasps
Ovo-viviparous	Live-bearing animals that retain eggs for incubation internally
Oxidation	When oxygen combines with a metallic substance in a chemical reaction

P

Palaeontology	The study of fossils
Palatability	How tasty an animal finds a plant or another animal
Paleo-climate	Ancestral climatic conditions that were prevalent thousands or millions of years ago
Palps (labial)	Sensory organs of the mouthparts of insects
Panleukopenia	A viral disease affecting the immune system of felids.
Papillae	Absorption structures in the stomach, resembling small bumps
Parakeratosis	An abnormal condition affecting the epidermal cells of tissues
Parasite	An organism that derives its nutritional needs from another living organism at the expense of that organism (called a host)
Parasitism	A symbiotic relationship in which the parasite benefits and the host is negatively affected
Parent Material	A term used to describe the original underlying rock from which soil was formed
Paresis	The weakening of the muscles, leading to partial paralysis
Parotid	Pertaining to the throat region
Parturition	The act of giving birth
Parvovirus	Viral disease-causing suppression of the immune system in canids
Passerine	Perching birds

Pathogen	Harmful microorganism responsible for disease, cholera, botulism, syphilis and many others
Pathogenicity	The ability of the vector to induce any degree of disease in the host
Pathogenesis	The process of the development of disease in a host
Pecora	A systematic division of the Artiodactyla representing those animals with well-developed, four-chambered ruminant stomachs. Most have paired horns on the head. E.g. Giraffe and all the bovids.
Pecorans	Ruminant mammals, usually with paired horns
Pedogenesis	The formation of soil
Pedoturbation	Mixing of the soil layers by earthworms for example
Pelage	The "pelt" of fur-bearing animals
Perennial	Plants that live for several years
Perennial (plants)	A plant that lives more than two years
Perennial (water)	A body of water (river, stream or lake) that remains throughout the year or over many years.
Perihelion	The closest point of a planet's orbit from the sun
Perissodactyla	Odd-toed ungulates. Members of this mammalian order are characterised by having either a single toe or three toes together. E.g. Zebra and rhino.
Petechiation	The appearance of flat, purplish-red spots on internal tissue; normally caused by an internal haemorrhage
Petiole	The stalk that attaches a leaf to a stem

Phenology	The study of a plant's life cycle, including flowering, abscission, fruit production etc.
Pheromones	Chemical substances secreted by animals that cause specific reproductive, developmental or behavioural responses in neighbouring members of the same species
Photo-sensitivity	Over-sensitivity to sunlight
Photoperiodism	The response of plants to changing day and night length
Photosynthesis	The process whereby plants produce carbohydrates from sunlight
Phototropism	The growth of a plant in response to a light source
Physiognomical structure	The general form, shape and appearance of the vegetation
Physiognomy	The structure, in terms of height and density, of the vegetation comprising a plant community e.g. Short closed grassland
Physiographic	A combination of factors that are used to describe an ecosystem, including topography, aspects, latitude and altitude
Physiological	Pertaining to body chemistry
Phytomass	The mass of grass material in a specific area
Phytomers	Describing the general morphology of grass, consisting of an internode, node, leaf, bud and adventitious root
Pica	Depraved appetite. Animals consume unusual substances to satisfy a mineral deficiency, especially phosphorus.
Picarism	The ability that animals have to sense they are ill or have a mineral deficiency. The seeking and consumption of unusual food by animals which are sick or suffering from a mineral deficiency
Pinnae	External ear lobes

Pioneer stage	Vegetation that is the first to colonise (begin growing) in an area.
Piscivore	A diet of fish
Plankton	Small floating or weakly swimming plants and animals in fresh and marine ecosystems
Plantigrade	An animal that walks or stands on the whole surface of its feet e.g. Humans, other primates and bears
Plastron	The lower portion of a Chelonia shell
Plumage	Feathers
Pod	The hard outer shell that protects fruit/seeds
Pollination	The transfer of genetic material (pollen) from the stamen (male part) of one flower to the stigma (female part) of another flower of the same species
Polyandry	The mating of one female with more than one male
Polygamy	A male that mates with more than one female
Polymorphism	Different body forms in the same species e.g. Soldier and worker termites
Population	A group of conspecifics that reside in the same habitat in the same area or region
Pre-orbital	Pertaining to the region around the eye
Precipitation	Any form of rain, sleet, snow, hail dew, fog or mist
Precocial	Young born in an advanced state, they can move about, covered in fur or feathers, and are not blind and helpless
Predilection site	Preferred attachment places for ticks

Prehensile	Able to grasp and hold onto things with a tail/tongue
Preputial	Pertaining to the genital region of males, specifically the penile area
Primate	Mammals having opposable thumbs for grasping
Proto-alkaloids	An alkaloid without the heterocyclic nitrogen atom.
Protozoa	A unicellular animal
Prussic Acid Poisoning	Poisoning in animals after consuming wilted and damaged plants containing harmful glycosides
Pseudo-alkaloids	Type of alkaloid differing from others in terms of the origin of the carbon framework.
Psychological	Pertaining to the mind, usually regarding behaviour
Pupa	Insect in the pre-active, pre-adult form (cocoon)
Putrefaction	Decomposition of organic substances and the release of foul-smelling gases

Q

Quarantine	Restricting the movement of animals to prevent the spread of disease
Quinine	A bitter-tasting chemical used in the treatment of Malaria, or as an anti-malarial
Quintal	A unit of measure equal to 100 Kilograms (220.5 lbs)

R

Rabies	A viral disease, specifically of canids - although all mammals are susceptible. Mortality is extremely high.
Radula	A specialised feeding apparatus of molluscs, a conveyer belt-like tongue, studded with teeth that is used to scrape up vegetation
Raptor	A bird of prey
Ratites	Flightless birds
Regurgitation	Vomiting/Throw back up
Reservoir Host	An animal that harbours a parasite without suffering any adverse effects
Resilience	The ability of an ecosystem to recover from a disturbance
Reticulum	The second compartment of a ruminants' stomach. It is non-glandular; it directs re-chewed food to the omasum
Rhinotracheitis	A viral disease affecting felines and causing flu-like symptoms
Rhizome	The modified stem of a plant which grows underground
Rickets	Vitamin D deficiency resulting in defective bone growth in young animals
Rinderpest	A viral disease affecting all cloven-hooved animals.
Ring barking	Removing the bark from around the base of a tree. This usually causes the tree to die within 1 - 3 years
Riparian	Vegetation on either side of a riverbank
Riverine	Along a river's edge

Rotational grazing	A habitat management method whereby grazers are manipulated into moving from one area to another to graze
Roughage feeder	See bulk grazer
Rowland Ward System	A directory of big game records. Horn and tusk lengths and weights. The data is collected from hunted animals.
Rumen	The first compartment of a ruminant's stomach. It is non-glandular and holds symbiotic micro-organisms that facilitate the digestion of cellulose
Ruminant	An animal that chews the cud
Rupicolous	Free-living, able to move about at will
Rut	The period of sexual activity in animals specifically herbivores

S

Salmonellosis	A disease caused by bacteria of the Salmonella genus causing severe diarrhoea
Saprophyte	A plant that grows on dead organic matter
Sarcocystosis	Heteroxenic protozoal disease-causing cysts in herbivores and mild gastro-intestinal upsets in carnivores
Savannah	Vegetation consisting of grass and scattered trees Primarily a grassland biome
Scat	The faeces or droppings of carnivores
Scavenger	An animal that eats dead and decaying animals
Scorching effect	Woody vegetation is burnt during its active growing phase. This reduces its density.
Scutes	A layer of keratin scales. Found in the on the shells on Chelonia and on pangolin
Sedated	An animal which has been exposed to a high or excessive dose of tranquillisers
Sedentary	Inactive species that exhibits very little movement e.g. Mussels
Sedge	A grass-like plant growing in marshes
Sedimentary	Rock formed from material deposited in layers
Seep-line	The line on a slope where soil and clay meet and where water can come out on to the surface
Segment	A distinct plate or part of an insect's skin or armour
Seizures	Convulsions

Selective Feeder	An animal that is selective about species and length of grass eaten by preference
Selective feeder/grazer	An animal that feeds by carefully selecting the species being eaten
Senescence	The process of ageing leading ultimately to death
Serology	The properties and reactions of antibodies
Serum	Artificially produced and administered chemical compound
Sessile	An organism that spends its entire lifecycle fixed to one site E.g. Plants
Sinistral	Left-handed or pertaining to the left
Sirenians	The Order of mammals containing the manatees, sea lions and dugong
Slaframine	A toxic alkaloid secreted by a specific fungus species
Slangkop	Type of plant containing cardiac glycosides; harmful to animals especially in spring
Slashing	A habitat management technique for cutting grass
Slough	To shed (skin) associated with snakes
Smectites	Clay materials which have swelling properties
Snotsiekte	Bovine malignant catarrhal fever
Solitary	An animal that generally chooses to live alone
Sunder	The collective noun for warthog

Sour Grass	Grass that is not readily digestible and is usually only eaten by grazers when it is young and tender
Sour veld	Grazing that loses its palatability and nutritional value at maturity
South African Sub Region	Southern Africa including Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho and South Africa
Speciation	The evolution of a species
Species diversity	The relative abundance of species in a specific area/region/habitat/biome or community in relation to another
Species richness	The physical number of species in a specific area/region/habitat/biome or community
Spermatophore	Genetic material produced by the male
Spiracles	Holes on the sides of an arthropod through which gas exchange occurs
Stabilimenta	A zig-zag thickened conspicuous web stand in the centre of a web to warn animals or birds of the web's presence
Stability	When pertaining to an ecosystem it is how the system can resist change
Stamen	The male reproductive structure of a flower
Stigma	A part of the female reproductive structure of a flower
Stolon	A creeping stem of a plant which runs along or just beneath the surface of the ground
Stratification	Layering within an ecosystem
Stridulation	The act of an arthropod scraping an appendage along its exoskeleton to produce sound. Used either as a warning of its presence or to attract a conspecific

Stylets	Modified mouthparts of parasitic Arthropoda
Stywesiekte (stiff sickness)	Plant poisoning disease with symptoms like inflammation of the hooves and liver necrosis.
Sub-species	Geographical unit of a species population distinguishable by certain morphological and physiological characteristics
Substratum	The surface off which an organism lives, eats or otherwise interacts. Dependant on the context.
Succession	The changes in species diversity through which plant communities colonise an area May advance or retrogress
Supplementary Feeding	The artificial provision of nutrients lacking in natural veld conditions
Sustainable utilisation	The use of a natural resource without depleting its reserves
Sustainable yield	The amount of a natural resource that can be used or taken without depleting its reserves
Swamp	A wooded wetland where the water is either near to or above the ground
Sweet Grass	Grass that is palatable and chosen by grazers as food when it is available
Sweet veld	A low lying, frost-free area where grazing (grass) maintains its palatability and nutritional value throughout their life cycle.
Sylvatic cycle	The natural cycle may pertain to disease in its reservoir form
Symbionts	Organisms in a symbiotic relationship with another species
Symbiosis	A relationship between two different types of living organisms where both benefit and the association are compulsory

Synecology

The study of communities of organisms interacting with each other or with their environment.

T

Tactile	Pertaining to touch.
Tampan	A type of tick; lives in warthog burrows.
Tannin	A chemical produced in the leaves of plants that make the leaves unpalatable to animals.
Tapetum	A reflective layer inside the eyes of animals that maximise the amount of light entering the eye.
Taxon	A classification unit e.g. Kingdom, order, family, species.
Taxonomy	The classification of organisms into units (related groups).
Tef	See lucerne.
Telson	A scorpion's sting.
Temporal gland	A gland found on the head of animals, generally situated between the eyes and ears. Elephants produce a discharge from this gland during Musth.
Termitarium	A termite colony.
Terrestrial	Related to the land.
Territory	The area which an animal will defend against members of its own species.
Testosterone	A male hormone that accounts for the development of male characteristics and reproductive drive.
Thallophyte	Thallophytes are plants that do not have vascular conducting tissue - they have no phloem or xylem vessels. Lichen, mosses and liverworts are examples of thallophytic plants.

Thallophytes	Plants that do not possess true roots, stems or leaves e.g. Bacteria, algae and fungi.
Theileriosis (Corridor Disease)	Protozoal disease transmitted by two tick species causing fever and subsequent death.
Thermals	Rising columns of warm air.
Thermocline	The border between two different temperature zones, usually pertaining to water.
Thermoregulation	The regulation of internal body temperature.
Thigmotropism	Describes a plant's response to contact.
Thorax	Breast-plate or part of the insect body between the head and abdomen.
Thyroxine	A hormone produced by the thyroid gland which regulates metabolism in the body.
Topography	The form of a land surface e.g. Valley or crest.
Toposequence	A repetitive pattern of soils always associated with certain terrain morphological units.
Torpor	Hibernation daily.
Toxicosis	Any disease condition resulting from the ingestion of poison or toxic substance.
Toxins (plant)	Natural or secondary products produced by a plant which may be harmful to other organisms when ingested.
Toxoplasmosis	Protozoal disease-causing cysts in infected animals. Also, causes abortions and congenital disease in humans.
Trachea	Windpipe connecting the lungs with the mouth.

Tracker	The field guides assistant/partner principally responsible for tracking and finding game.
Tranquilising drugs	A drug that renders an animal unable to move. The animal is however conscious, awake and aware of its surroundings and experience. Used in game capture.
Tranquillised	A drugged animal which remains aware of its surroundings and cannot be handled easily. Tranquillisers remove fear and anxiety in animals.
Transpiration	The loss of water vapour by plants.
Trophic	The nutritional levels in the food chain.
Trunk	Elongated upper lip and nose, muscularised and highly dextrous.
Tusks	Elongated upper incisor teeth, mostly used in feeding.
Tympanum	A vibrating membrane in insects which detects sound.

U

Ungulate	A hoofed animal.
Unguligrade	An animal (ungulate) that walks on the tips of its modified toes (hooves).
Urea	A non-protein nitrogen source often included in licks as a protein supplement.
Urine energy	The energy lost from the animal through urination in the form of heat and nutrients.

V

Vector	An organism responsible for the spread of disease.
Venison	Game meat.
Vermeersiekte (expand sickness)	Disease-Causing vomiting due to the paralysis of the oesophagus.
Vestigial	Without any discernible function.
Vibrissae	Whiskers, highly sensitive tactile outgrowths of stiffened hair often from around the animal's muzzle.
Virulence	The degree to which severe disease is induced in a host.
Viviparous	An animal whose young are born alive and not from an egg.

W

Water dependent	Animals that require water to drink daily.
Water Table	The level at which water is found underground.
Waterlogged	The saturation of the soil with water whereby the water table is at ground level.
Wattle	Skin flaps usually on the sides of the face of certain birds, e.g. Saddle-billed stork.
Weaned	When a juvenile mammal stops suckling.
Weathering	The process whereby rock is eroded by either chemical or physical means.
Wetland	An area that is seasonally or permanently flooded.

X

Xerophthalmia	Conjunctivitis caused by vitamin A deficiency in which the eyes remain dry.
Xerophyte	A plant that grows in dry conditions.

Y

Yard	A unit of measure (non-metric) equivalent to just short of one meter.
Yearling	An animal (mammal) that is between one and two years old.
Yeast	A type of fungi (Ascomycota) used in fermentation and baking. See Lower Plants of the Field Guiding - Botany Module.

Z

Zero grazing	When animals are kept in captivity and exclusively fed in enclosures. They do not experience natural grazing.
Zonation	Dividing sections of an ecosystem into zones based on function / appearance / etc.
Zoogeography	A division of biology that deals with the geographical distribution of animals.
Zoonosis	An infection or infestation affecting both man and animal.
Zygote	The single-celled result from the fusion of egg and sperm.