By Amy Holt

Hospitality Vacancies

A leopard's gaze By David Batzofin

WildlifeCampus Study options

Hippos, a mongoose and me New Struik book

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WildlifeCampus Magazine - January 2024 - Volume 01 - FREE

Wildlife Can

Magazine

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A must have Field Guide to the mammals of Southern Africa written by Chris and Mathilde Stuart.	A free course designed to help you get clear on your dream career. This course was created by
Find a link to purchase your copy on the page!	Hayley Cooper, creator of the Front of House Lodge Operations Course, for WildlifeCampus.
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	Guide to mammals A must have Field Guide to the mammals of Southern Africa written by Chris and Mathilde Stuart. Find a link to purchase your

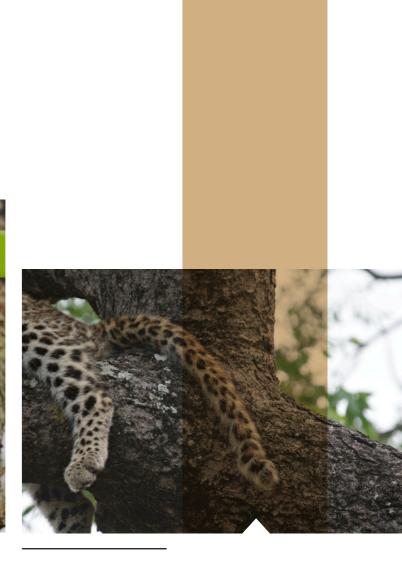
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Stuarts' Field Guide to

of Southern Africa

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of WildlifeCampus, its staff or partners.



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Our different study options

Not quite sure on what study option would be best suited for you?

Have a look at this table explaining the different options.

The leopard's gaze

David starts the year by taking us on one of his memorable trips.

This time we head out to the heart of the Botswana wilderness on a safari adventure to spot an elusive leopard.

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The show must go on!

The origin story of WildlifeCampus

By co-founder of WildlifeCampus and **Anchor CEO**

Peter Armitage



Missed the previous parts of this story? Click here to open the WildlifeCampus magazine where this exciting journey starts.

We eventually agreed that he would get 70% of all advertising revenues generated and we would pay all of the costs of the equipment. This would equate to a breakeven equation for us, but the content would be phenomenal and traffic would drive up the value of our business.

We were already broadcasting from Sabi Sabi, which is considered one of Mala Mala's biggest competitors. We discussed the project with Herbie Rosenberg, the marketing director of Sabi Sabi, and he reluctantly agreed that he would be happy with the project to go ahead, as long as there was no hyperlink to the Mala Mala website.

The situation was so extreme that we were not allowed to venture on to the Mala Mala land and if there was a problem with Kim's equipment we would have to meet him on the boundary of the Mala Mala land to fix the equipment.

With the help of Q, we installed a camera on the back of Kim's vehicle which showed him filming throughout the night. When he actually filmed, his assistants, Dale Hancock and Richard Slater-Jones, would switch over to Kim's camera.



The content proved to be phenomenal and at its peak, Leopard Cam generated over 40% of AfriCam's traffic and a few times a week AfriCam viewers would have the rare privilege of seeing Tjololo feasting on his prey that he had dragged up into a tree.

WildlifeCampus.com explains the dining habits of the leopard: "Like all cats, leopards are predators and live off flesh. They are capable of taking a wide range of ungulate species from 5 to 70 kg's (11 - 150 lbs). They are also not at all averse to taking carrion when available.

These cats are also opportunistic hunters and will take smaller alternative prey such as baboons, monkeys and hares. Leopards can also obtain all their water requirements from kills, and are therefore not dependent on water. They will however drink if water is available.

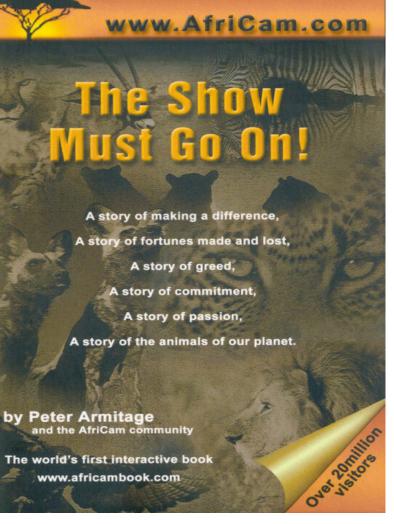
Leopards are the quintessential stalking predators, and the term "leopard crawling" is well founded. They prefer to hunt at night, and seek to crawl as close as possible to their chosen prey. They usually get within 5 and 20m (17 -120 ft.), before their explosive rush and pounce.

Their tan and black rosetted coat greatly aids in camouflage. If they miss, they seldom chase, and then no further than 50 metres (165 feet). This is despite the fact that they can reach an estimated top speed of 60 kilometres an hour (± 38 mph). While they may hunt during daylight hours, their success rate here is very poor, usually less than 10 %. Leopards have also been noted on occasion to drive cheetahs off their kills. Although they are the second largest of the African predators their kills are often vulnerable and can be taken from them by lion, hyena, wild dog and even jackal when they are in numbers.

They have, however, evolved an excellent way to overcome this problem. The leopard, being the strongest cat weight-for-weight has the ability to drag a carcass high into trees. The carcasses could be its own weight or more, and the cat claws its way up a vertical tree trunk with the animal in its mouth. In this way the leopard kill is quite protected, and it may return to the tree over the next three to four days to continue feeding off it. Thus the leopard doesn't have to make a kill as frequently as most other predators. This behaviour of caching prey in trees is not observed when leopards are the dominant predators in the region. It is to be noted from the leopards' mode of hunting, that they are solitary animals. The males only interact with the females long enough to mate and then leave. Both sexes maintain specific territories, and males tend to respect these boundaries, although female home ranges may overlap. Territory marking is done by scratch marks on tree trunks, as well as urine

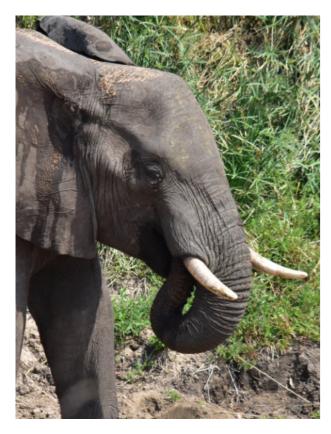
In one rare display of territoriality two adult male leopards were observed walking

and defecation.



"The Show Must Go On by Peter Armitage and the AfriCam community."

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towards each other. One stopped short, and the other continued to it. When they met, both turned in the same direction and walked parallel to each other for a kilometre or so as though an invisible barrier separated the two. They then broke off in different directions."

Deals on a disposable napkin

"The prospect of real revenues" - Early 2000

"We can develop the businesses side by side," Peter Henderson explained.

None of us had taken any paper to our lunch with Peter at Dino's, which was our favourite dining venue at the Lonehill Shopping Centre, so Peter started drawing the structure on a disposable napkin.

While Peter was drawing on the napkin I noticed that one of his hands was slightly disfigured. It was too early in our relationship to ask personal questions, but we later learnt that Peter had been attacked by a lioness.

Fifteen-odd years previously, Peter had been filming some lion cubs in an enclosure for a TV commercial when the mother of the cubs had attacked him and mauled his hand. Peter risked losing his hand, but had a full recovery after some intensive surgery and had almost full use of his hand back. This impressed us in a bizarre way and at this stage Peter had a mystique about him.

"I want to do business with somebody who will go to those lengths to get the right shot," Graham suggested, partly joking, but partly dead serious.

Peter wanted 50% of AfriCam and no less, and we explained to him that it was simply not available. "If our business is going to list at over US\$100m, that would mean that you would have to come up with US\$50m, which seems unlikely." We were already talking like business partners. All that we needed to do was work out a structure which would satisfy all of our needs. I added a few scribbles to the napkin and we were starting to get to an equation that would work.

Peter had not seen the AfriCam income statement, but he knew the traffic numbers and was excited about the approaches that we had received from the major merchant bankers. Based in London, he was also very familiar with the AfriCam brand.

We desperately wanted to work with Peter. His previous business experience was in the satellite world and satellite meant that we had the capability to get images from any remote location in the world on the internet. AfriCam could not afford to use satellite technology and Peter could change the face of AfriCam.

Despite the listing talk, I was also very keen to solidify the value of AfriCam and bring in some "real" revenues and Peter offered this opportunity.

He would start developing the TV side of the business, we would carry on with the internet business and we would "merge" at an agreed date. It was a little cumbersome, but sounded like it could work, but we needed to discuss it with the other shareholders.

I phoned Saul and he set up a time with JB, who had no dayto-day involvement with AfriCam, but was a valuable asset at times like these when there was a negotiation to be concluded.

The next afternoon we all made our way to the Sandton Sun, where JB was now conducting his business, for the pivotal meeting.

"Eye to eye" - Early 2000

JB, Duarte, Saul, Colin, Paul, Graham, Peter Henderson and I all gathered in the lounge section of JB's suite at the Sandton Sun, to conclude what we all believed would be AfriCam's key deal. Middlemas appeared to be on board, a listing was in prospect, but Peter Henderson was about real value-add. It was bringing together our internet traffic, his satellite

expertise and real guaranteed cash.

JB is the consummate negotiator and what followed was an hour of masterful strategic positioning and negotiation. JB dominated the meeting completely and spoke as if AfriCam was his firstborn child. His stature and balance sheet shifted the balance of negotiating power to our advantage.

I explained the discussions we had had to date and JB effectively dismissed everything we had negotiated. JB first wanted to listen to what Peter had to say and assess his credibility and intentions.

Peter saw himself as anybody's equal and quickly established his credentials and explained his background. JB sensed that Peter Henderson had substantial capital and was as impressed as we were with our guest.

"So what is it that you are proposing?" JB probed.

"I want 50% of AfriCam in return for what I can bring to the company and I think that would be a fair deal. I would like to be an equal partner. I get on well with the AfriCam management and believe in their capabilities, but I believe I can at least double the value of the business with what I can add."

"Explain exactly what you want to do."

"I believe that the concept of live broadcasting of wildlife is well suited to television. A key element is satellite space and this is the world in which I have been operating. I will use satellite technology to gather and broadcast wildlife imagery on television and the internet. I will have dedicated teams, initially in five locations globally, who will create archive footage, daily news inserts, weekly half-hour specials and eventually a full-blown TV channel. And I believe that AfriCam is the ideal partner."

Peter sounded impressive and convincing and JB smelt money. It was now a case of doing the right deal

JB asked how much it would cost for Peter to fulfil his vision and Peter indicated that a budget of US\$5m per year for three years would be reasonable, which was US\$15m in total.

"The issue is that the current shareholders do not want to dilute," I explained. "So we have been trying to work out an equation whereby Peter can be an equal partner."

"Well we all want Peter as a partner, so let's work out a way to make it work," JB quickly interjected. He clearly had a plan. "Now Mr Henderson, our business is already worth at least US\$17.5m, which is the latest price paid by African Harvest

and Real Africa. So, your introduction should make the business worth at least US\$35m, bearing in mind just the cash that you are injecting."

JB was using Peter's own justification of his ability to add value to motivate the deal. Peter had no choice but go along with it, or it would undermine his argument.

"And the value should increase each year based on this management team and your own initiatives. But we also cannot face the risk of your initiative not working. I tell you what, we will give you a guaranteed 10% of the business for your US\$15m, even if you do not succeed."

Peter was starting to shift uncomfortably in his chair and I sensed that JB was going in a little hard.

"I need to be an equal partner or I am not prepared to enter into a relationship," Peter responded, as I expected.

"Absolutely," JB insisted, seeming to contradict himself. "You start at 50%, but the value of the business must go up each year. We start at a value of US\$35m and go up to US\$75m over three years. If the value of the business is above this, then you keep your 50%, otherwise your share is reduced according to the value that is reached. But you will always have a minimum of 10%. And if we are going to list at more than US\$100m, this is all academic anyway."

I looked on in awe. This was masterful negotiating, and Peter seemed to buy into the concept. He was clearly a risk-taker. JB had convinced Peter that he should invest the money in AfriCam at the top level and should back himself to create the value which would justify a 50% stake. JB believed in the concept of "the more something is worth, the more I am willing to share". He had come up with a similar concept in the negotiation with myself when I joined AfriCam. The more AfriCam was worth, the higher my equity stake would be. But it required some clever negotiating skills to convince Peter to buy into the concept.



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By WildlifeCampus student

Amy Holt

Butterflies have long captivated the imagination with their colourful wings, erratic flight patterns, and oh-so-brief lifespans. These delicate little creatures represent change, endurance, hope and life! But how did the butterfly come into existence?

Butterflies evolved from moths about 100 million years ago. Flowering plants and moths arose 300 million years ago. Most of these flowers were very simple and not pollinated by insects. The first coloured flowers appeared around 200 million years ago. As successful pollinators, bees drove flowers to become more colourful and attract diurnal insects. This created an open niche for moths to take advantage of. Almost all modern butterfly families had emerged when the dinosaurs went extinct 66 million years ago. Each butterfly family diversified rapidly alongside their plant host. This intricate history of butterflies demonstrates the interconnectedness of life on Earth and offers invaluable insights into the resilience of life.

There are four separate stages in a butterfly's life cycle, known as metamorphosis. The adult female butterfly lays tiny eggs on a plant. The colour and texture of the eggs can vary among species. This egg hatches into a larva (caterpillar). The caterpillar's goal is to eat and grow. As a caterpillar grows, it sheds its skin and passes through instars. An instar is a stage between moults. The number of instars varies between butterfly species. For example, monarchs go through five instars. The larva then evolves into a pupa (chrysalis), which starts soft but gradually hardens to form a protective layer. Inside the chrysalis, the caterpillar's body digests itself from the inside out. The old body is broken down into imaginal cells containing the butterfly's blueprint.. Each imaginal cell will become a part of the butterfly. For example, one imaginal cell will become a wing. After the change (metamorphosis), the adult breaks out of the hard casing to emerge as a fully grown butterfly. The adult's primary goal is to disperse and reproduce. Metamorphosis prevents adults and larvae from competing for the same food or risking infection from the same diseases. The lifecycles of some butterflies take place across entire continents.



Butterflies

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Butterflies are creatures of summer, so what happens when winter comes? Most butterfly species overwinter as caterpillars or eggs. Some caterpillar species pupate just before winter, surviving as a chrysalis and completing their metamorphosis next year. While, some butterfly species migrate to avoid winter. The painted lady has the longest insect migration, undertaking almost 9000 miles round trip from tropical Africa to the Arctic Circle. The whole journey involves up to six successive generations of butterflies, meaning the painted ladies returning to Africa in autumn are several generations removed from their ancestors who left Africa earlier in the year.

One of the most spectacular natural phenomena is the monarch migration, where clouds of orange and black transform the skies. Monarch butterflies migrate from the US and Canada, where they breed, down to the forests of central Mexico, where they overwinter. This 3000-mile journey may take up to four or five generations of butterflies to complete the entire round trip. When migrating, monarchs use air currents and thermals to travel long distances. These butterflies have a genetic clock in their antennae that tells them when to migrate. To navigate, they measure the Sun's position on the horizon with their compound eyes. Monarch butterflies usually have a lifespan of two to six weeks. However, the generation born at the end of summer can live up to nine months.

The butterfly has developed an erratic flight pattern to avoid predation from birds. Instead of flapping their wings up and down like birds, butterflies contract their bodies making a

slanted figure of eight pattern with their wings. As the butterfly's body contracts, the motion pushes air under their wings. This causes the wings to 'clap' together and thrust the butterfly forward. Piercolias forsteri is the highest flying butterfly, flying about 4200 metres above sea level in the Andes Mountains of Bolivia. Another mechanism that butterflies use to avoid predation is large eyespots on their wings. The owl butterfly has yellow ringed eyespots which looks like the feathery face of an owl, hence the name. While, the African squinting bush brown butterfly can change the size of its eyespots as the environment changes to avoid predators. During the cool, dry season, it has very small eyespots. The hot, wet season triggers the eyespots to become much bigger.

A butterfly's wings aren't just used to avoid predation but as a signal to other butterflies. They can recognise their species or even find a mate. A male butterfly flutters its colourful wings as it begins its aerial dance, hoping to attract a female. Each butterfly has a mating dance to ensure that butterflies mate with their species. Female butterflies signal to males their availability to mate by producing pheromones (chemical signals). Pheromones are also species-specific.

The colours in a butterfly's wings come from pigmented colour or structural colour, or a combination of both. Chemical pigments absorb specific wavelengths of light and reflect others. The reflected light is what we perceive as colour. Structural colour is created by the thousands of microscopic scales on the wings. Each scale has multiple layers.



When light hits these different layers, it is reflected many times creating intense colours that can appear to move with the butterfly (iridescence).

The sensory systems of butterflies is quite different from humans, they can taste with their feet and can even see ultraviolet light. Butterflies have compound eyes that are made up of many smaller eyes, which each have their own lens. These eyes allow them to see forwards, backwards, above and below all at the same time. Butterflies have six or more photoreceptor classes, giving them excellent perception of fast-moving objects. The antennae are attached to the top of the butterfly's head and are used to pick up chemicals in the air, such as the scent of a mate. They also help with balance and detecting motion. Butterflies feed through their straw-like structure, the proboscis. This is used to suck up liquids, such as nectar. They taste through chemical receptors in their feet, allowing them to detect whether a plant is sweet, bitter, sour or salty. Taste receptors in their feet allow them to choose the best host plant for their eggs.

Puddling is common in butterflies, where they gather nutrients from a shallow mud puddle. Here, they take in salts and minerals from the soil. Puddling behaviour is primarily seen in male butterflies who need extra nutrients for mating. Sodium loss is more severe in males as they give away a third of their sodium to their reproductive partner.

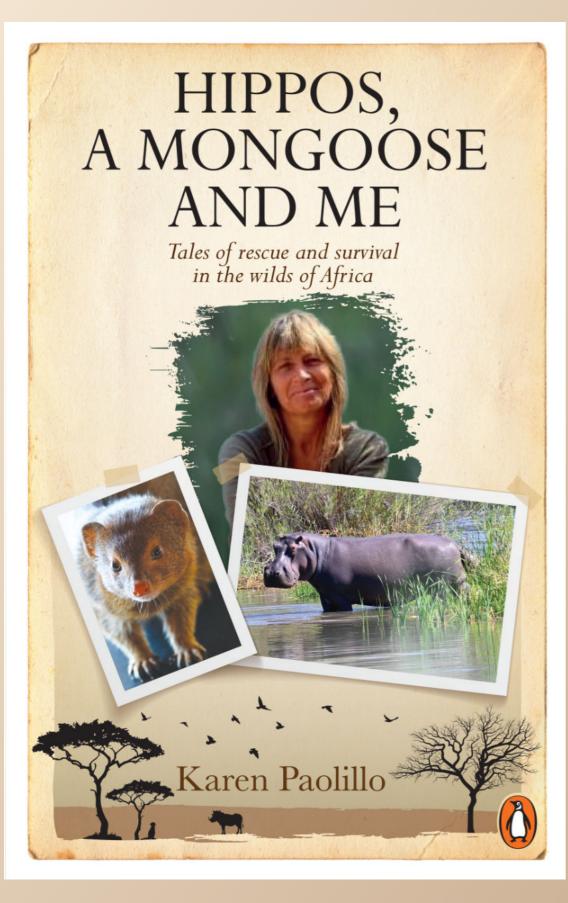


Butterflies aren't just beautiful; they play a critical role in the ecosystem. As they meander through meadows of wildflowers, they are helping with pollination. Nectar acts as flight fuel for butterflies. While feeding, they gather pollen on their bodies, which they deposit in other flowers they visit. Unlike bees, butterflies lack specialised structures for collecting pollen. They have long, thin legs, which are less efficient at picking up as much pollen as bees. However, butterflies will travel longer distances to find food. This means they can pollinate flowers in a much larger area than bees can.

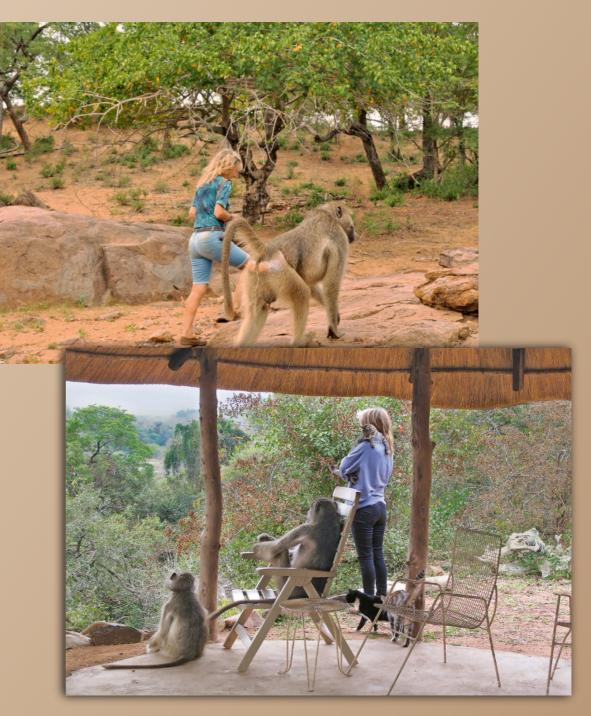
Butterflies are indicators of a healthy environment. This is because they have short lifecycles and react quickly to environmental changes. They can tell us almost everything we need to know about the health of an ecosystem. Indeed, a decline in butterflies has a knock-on effect on birds. Butterflies are indeed an integral part of nature.

As we enter a new year, the butterfly resonates deeply with the human experience. Its metamorphosis offers a mirror to our transformation. Its journey reflects our endurance. And its delicate existence reminds us of the true beauty of life.

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Hippos, a Mongoose and Me is a collection of vivid stories reflecting Karen Paolillo's decades of living and working in the wilds of southeast Zimbabwe. The tales encompass a wide variety of animals and experiences, including Karen's extraordinary affinity with hippos, life with her beloved mongoose, characterful baboons and rescued birds, close encounters with lions, and her heart-stopping flight from an enraged elephant.

To add to the drama, Karen and her husband, Jean-Roger, must face off against the drumbeat of political subterfuge and poaching of wildlife, sometimes at significant personal risk. Inspiring, surprising and occasionally sad, this heartfelt anthology is a testament to the courage and resilience of its intrepid author.

> Get your copy of Hippos, a mongoose and me here!





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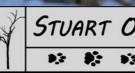
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Chris & Mathilde Stuart



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Her business, Wild Dreams Hospitality, offers hospitality recruitment, consulting and training services. She has a range of career and business coaching options, from 1:1 express calls where you can ask a general question you really need help with to interview preparation coaching as well as long-term 1:1 personalised coaching. She also offers holistic career clarity coaching, including group programs such as "Aligning Dreams: Career Clarity."

Her area of expertise is helping people find value-aligned careers, as well as her niche in the hospitality and tourism industry, where she has spent the last 25 years of her own career.

Although this is a short course, it will get you on the right path to feeling like your career is an extension of who you are.









WILD DREAMS JOB VACANCIES

Wild Dreams is a prominent company in the hospitality industry, specialising in recruitment and consultancy. We mainly focus on the safari lodge sector, as evident from our clientele. Our clients range from small lodges that accommodate only a few individuals to well-known large lodge groups with properties scattered throughout Africa.

At Wild Dreams, we are always on the lookout for field guides with various levels of experience. Additionally, we have positions where guiding knowledge is required, but the role is more focused on front of house or management responsibilities.

As a company, we prioritise conservation and actively support wildlife sanctuaries. We are deeply involved in community work and collaborate with numerous non-profit organisations in the wildlife and conservation field.

While we believe that most of you may find the aforementioned positions interesting, we also have constant vacancies in areas such as reservations, maintenance, and chef roles. To access these job opportunities, you can scan the provided QR code to visit our main jobs page. If you come across a job that catches your interest, you can submit your application online. However, if you don't find a suitable job at the moment, you can still upload your application directly into our database.

Furthermore, we have dedicated pages offering interview advice and CV tips. We even provide a free CV template that you can download. Our founder, who is a certified career coach, is deeply passionate about assisting individuals in finding their dream jobs.

> Wishing you a successful job search! The Wild Dreams team.

> > www.wilddreams.co.za



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The Leopard's Gaze

An unforgettable encounter in the heart of Botswana

By David Batzofin



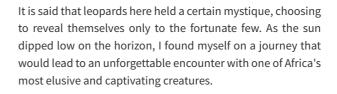
When on game drives from lodges, the most elusive of the cats is certainly the leopard. Solitary by nature, it is often the last of the Big 5 to be ticked off a list, if seen at all.

In fact they can be so difficult that it is often the leopard that will find the vehicle than the other way round.

This game of 'cat and guest' has played itself out on so many of my bush trips that often our guide has bumbled around for the longest while without even so much as a glimpse of the predator.

However, on a trip into the heart of the Botswana wilderness, I embarked on a safari adventure, not knowing that nature's most enigmatic predator had quite a surprise in store for me.





As our safari vehicle ventured through the rugged terrain of Botswana, our guide's words resonated with mystery. He As quickly as the moment had unfolded, the leopard, perhaps spoke of leopards with a sense of reverence, acknowledging sated by our silent exchange, broke eye contact and melted their reputation as the phantoms of the wilderness. It was into the reeds. It vanished, a whisper in the tapestry of the whispered that to find a leopard, you had to let it find you. We African savannah. The profound silence that followed embraced the wisdom of patience, traversing the wild with lingered in the air like an unspoken promise. bated breath.

On the second day, as the early morning sun casts golden hues across the landscape, we spotted our first leopard. Hidden amidst the dappled shade of an acacia tree, it lay with the grace and poise that only these cats could exude. Its rosette-marked coat glistened like liquid gold in the sunlight. We watched in silent awe as it effortlessly slinked away into the undergrowth, disappearing as swiftly as a phantom.

The days rolled on, each bringing new encounters with these enchanting felines. A mother leopard with her playful cub and a solitary male seeking his destiny in the wilderness graced us with fleeting glimpses. Their alluring gazes captured our souls and left an indelible mark on our spirits.

On our final day, a whisper of a different kind reached our ears. An elusive leopard, known for its reclusive nature, had been spotted near the camp I was staying at. With hearts racing, we embarked on a quest to glimpse this mysterious creature.

Our guide led us to a remote two-track gravel path surrounded by reeds that rustled in the gentle breeze. As we ventured deeper into the wilderness, anticipation coursed through our veins. The vehicle slowed to a crawl, and there it was, concealed in the golden grass.

The reclusive leopard stood merely a breath away from our vehicle, its sinewy form a portrait of grace and power. It was as though the boundaries between the wild and the human world had dissolved, and time itself had ceased to exist.

Our eyes locked in a moment of silent understanding. I peered through the camera lens, capturing an image that was both intimate and vulnerable, the only eye my lens could focus on. In the gaze of this majestic creature, I saw a world of stories untold, a lifetime of survival etched into its soul



For what seemed like an eternity, we shared a connection that transcended words. There was no fear, no threat, just the profound recognition of two beings, inhabitants of this wild, untamed kingdom. The leopard held me in its gaze with a quiet intensity, and I, in turn, felt a deep reverence for this sentinel of the wilderness.

To this day, the memory of that encounter endures as a treasured moment of my journey through Botswana. It's a reminder that in the heart of the wilderness, one can find not just the beauty of nature, but a profound connection to the untamed spirits that call it home.

In that single, unspoken gaze, I found a bond that will forever tie my soul to the enigmatic soul of the African leopard, an encounter that will last a lifetime and beyond.



