



Wildlife Campus

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Magazine

**What type of guide
will you be?**
Part #6

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by ASI**

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Photography competition!

WildlifeCampus

What type of guide

Will you be? Part #6



WildlifeCampus CEO
Todd Kaplan

In this feature, Garth Thompson explores types of guides.

Guiding attracts a wide, diverse, and interesting group of people, those that have been in the industry for some time can quickly place guides in a number of different categories. We continue this roll call with...

The people's person

These guides join the tourist industry because they genuinely enjoy the company of people. They are outgoing, sociable, extroverted and have great communication skills. Together with a relaxed personality they are able to relate to people of all walks of life.

Contrary to the reclusive animal lover, for this type of guide, wildlife is a means to be with people. They know enough to get by on an average safari activity and keep their clients happy with stories and light-hearted jokes. They do not delve too deeply into nature and will seldom have an in-depth knowledge of zoology, botany, ethology, astronomy or ecology.

Despite this, their easy-going, willing-to-please personality almost always ensures that clients arrive back from a game drive satisfied. For the average tourist (which possibly accounts for 80 per cent of clients who go on safari) this is an ideal guide. The safari is productive and relaxed and the clients do not have the whole encyclopaedia of wildlife thrown at them in the first hour.

This type of guide is often quite casual and does not succumb to unnecessary pressure by having to race around to find the next spectacular sighting. They therefore guide slowly and abide by their instincts, which usually produces good results in wildlife

sightings. They are responsive to people's feelings, needs and desires. Importantly, their relationship does not end when the guest climbs out of the safari vehicle on returning to camp. You will frequently find this guide sitting at the breakfast, lunch and dinner table chatting to and entertaining guests long after the other guides have scuttled off to get some respite from their clients. This guide also gets the best gratuities.

This type of guide enjoys spending time discussing all aspects of life. They show a genuine interest in where guests are from, their culture, travel, work and family. They can converse on a wide variety of topics, ranging from wildlife to sport, current affairs, travel, literature and entertainment.



What type of guide Will you be? Part #6

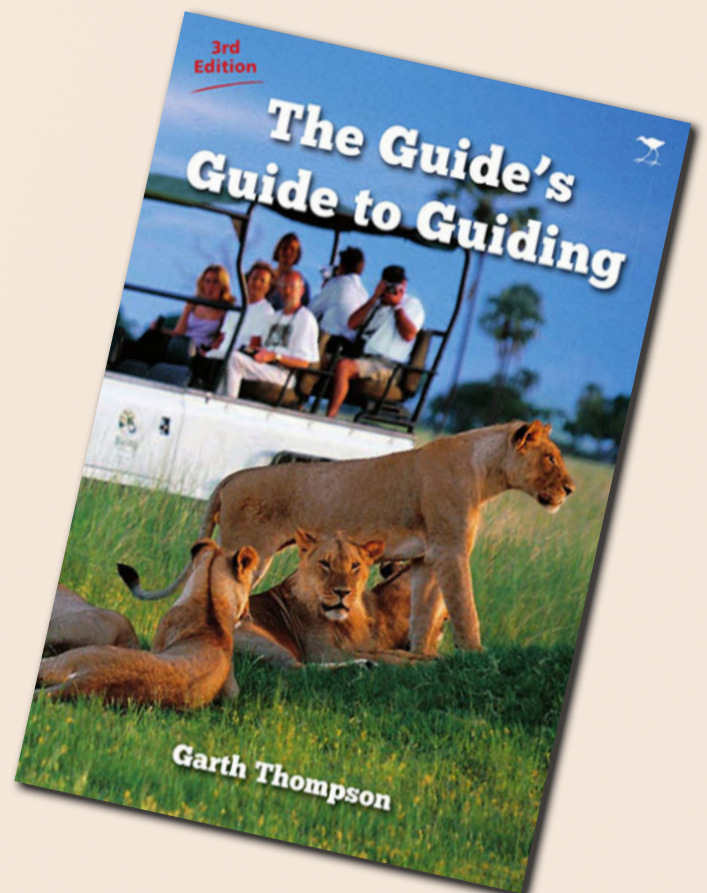
They are not necessarily totally dedicated to the wildlife cause and they are as at home in the bush as they are in a city. They look forward to their time off.

This type of guide does not satisfy the avid birder, botanist or entomologist. These clients are deeply focused in their particular interest and demand as much exposure to, and information on, their chosen obsession. Unless the guide is similarly inclined with an in-depth knowledge of the client's chosen subject, the guide will disappoint every time. This type of client is difficult to please.

For most tourists, however, a people-orientated guide will show them enough wildlife, make them comfortable, make them laugh, feel at home and frequently form lifelong friendships. In short, give them a good time. The 'average' tourists want to be satisfied in the way that they have seen, and photographed, what they imagined

they would experience. They like to feel wanted and well-treated. Their desire is to make friends with their guide, to have an uncomplicated stay and to leave happy, healthy and safe. This type of guide, the people's person makes it happen.

Garth Thompson is one of the world's foremost field guides and the author of the must-read The Guide's Guide to Guiding.



**Click the book to try the
FREE component of the WildlifeCampus
Guide's Guide to Guiding course!**

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



Wildlife Campus

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Photography competition “Win an elephant”



Join our **Facebook group**
and keep a lookout for the
pachyderm post that will
go live on the **15th of November**

Stand a chance to “foster”
an orphaned baby elephant
at HERD for 1 year!



ALL ABOUT ANTIVENOM



Snakebite in Africa is a huge problem, especially in the more rural areas where victims have limited or no access to proper medical facilities. In the case of severe snakebite envenomation from a potentially deadly species the only effective and potentially lifesaving treatment is antivenom. The sooner the victim is taken to a medical facility, the higher their chances of survival.

Sadly, there are several myths about other substances that “cure” snakebite symptoms, such as injecting antihistamine, cortisone, vitamin C and other natural concoctions. These have no effect in cases of severe envenomation and should be avoided at all costs.

In serious bites there is no substitute for antivenom. It is a complex drug and should only be administered in a hospital environment by trained medical professionals



Rinkhals venom was then added followed by the production of different mamba antivenoms in the 50's and 60's and in 1971 the venom of the Forest Cobra, Mozambique Spitting Cobra and Snouted Cobra was included to produce a polyvalent antivenom that is still manufactured today.

Antivenom is now produced by the South African Vaccine Producers in Sandringham, Johannesburg and the polyvalent antivenom is made from venom from 10 snake species: Puff Adder, Gaboon Adder, Rinkhals, Green Mamba, Jameson's Mamba, Black Mamba, Cape Cobra, Forest Cobra, Snouted Cobra and Mozambique Spitting Cobra.

In addition to these species there is evidence that there is cross-coverage and the polyvalent antivenom has been used for bites from other snakes like the Black-necked Spitting Cobra and the Black Spitting Cobra.



In Southern Africa we have two different antivenoms, the Polyvalent Antivenom covers bites from the Mambas, Cobras, Rinkhals, Puff Adder and Gaboon Adder, and the Monovalent Antivenom is used for Boomslang bites only.

History of antivenom:

Antivenom for snakebite was developed back in 1886 and local production started in Pietermaritzburg in 1901, but in small quantities with most of the antivenom still being imported from the Pasteur Institute in Paris, France. In 1928 the South African Institute for Medical Research (SAIMR) started producing antivenom which was initially limited to neutralising only the venom of the Cape Cobra and Puff Adder, but Gaboon Adder venom was included into the manufacturing process in 1938. Around this time the first monovalent Boomslang antivenom was also developed.

How it's made:

Antivenom is made by hyper immunising horses, a process that takes around nine months. During this time small quantities of snake venom are injected into horses, not enough to harm the horse, but enough to trigger its immune systems. The amount of venom injected is gradually increased as the horse becomes more resistant to the venom. Snake venom is sourced from individuals and companies locally and elsewhere in Africa. Once immune, blood is drawn from the horse at two-month intervals and the serum is removed from the blood, the latter is returned to the horse and the serum purified. It is bottled in 10 ml vials in liquid form. Each vial of antivenom must be refrigerated and will expire after 3 years.



How it's used:

It is not a first aid treatment and should only be administered in a hospital environment by a medical doctor. Part of the reason for this is that nine out of ten snakebite victims do not require antivenom. Some victims also have an allergic reaction and for this reason antivenom should only be administered in a hospital environment where a medical team can cope with such reactions.

Snakebite victims are not automatically injected with antivenom as most of them never experience symptoms severe enough to justify its use. The majority of snakes have control over their venom glands and are quite reluctant to waste their venom on humans. They very often give 'dry' bites with no subsequent symptoms of envenomation, or the snake might inject a little bit of venom that will cause discomfort or some symptoms but nothing serious. Such patients are usually hospitalised for a day, carefully monitored and then sent home.

Antivenom should only be used in a hospital environment and when absolutely necessary. Patients will already be on a drip and the antivenom is always administered intravenously although intraosseous administration may be a consideration if veins prove difficult to find.

Most doctors will start with an initial dosage of 6 – 10 vials (Polyvalent antivenom) and in a recent severe mamba bite the victim received 40 vials before recovering. As already mentioned, some snakebite victims quickly have an allergic reaction to antivenom and this happens in more than 40% of all cases where antivenom is used.

Some of those victims go into anaphylactic shock which is a life-threatening medical condition and must be treated with adrenaline. This has to do with the fact that our antivenom is made from horse blood and the allergy is triggered by an allergy to horse proteins. Additional processes in the manufacturing of the polyvalent antivenom could also reduce the incidences of anaphylaxis.

Why is there no antivenom for certain species?

The development of antivenom is extremely expensive and takes many years as each new antivenom needs to be subjected to clinical trials. For that reason we only have antivenom for those snakes that have caused fatalities in the past. A number of snakes have rather potent venoms that cause a great deal of damage and have the potential of resulting in fatal bites but are not covered by antivenom. This includes the likes of the Vine Snake (*Thelotornis capensis capensis*), the Berg Adder (*Bitis atropos*), the Common Night Adder (*Causus rhombeatus*) and Bibron's Stiletto Snake (*Atractaspis bibronii*). Patients that are bitten by any of these snakes often need to be hospitalised where doctors will treat symptoms.



Pets and Snakebite:

Cats rarely get bitten by snakes, but dogs just cannot help themselves when they see a snake and invariably try to kill the snake. While some dogs are quite efficient at killing snakes, they usually end up getting bitten.

In cases of severe envenomation, pets and farm animals need antivenom and should be taken to a vet immediately. Giving your pet Allergex tablets, milk, charcoal or any other tablet is of absolutely no use.



In most snakebites from potentially deadly species a dog will be injected with 2 – 4 vials of Polyvalent antivenom or 2 vials of Monovalent antivenom if bitten by a Boomslang. In mamba or Cape Cobra bites even more antivenom may be required and the sooner it is administered, the better. Such a treatment could cost anything from R4,000 – R20,000.

Which hospital stock antivenom?

We are often asked which hospitals carry antivenom. There is no register of hospitals that stock antivenom. A hospital can purchase antivenom today, use it tomorrow and not replace it. Hospitals in high-risk snakebite areas tend to keep antivenom and those in low-risk areas seldom do. Several hospitals also keep far too little antivenom for a single treatment. Bear in mind that snakebite deaths, in the short term, are largely because venom effects breathing and for that reason it is important to get the patient to the nearest hospital where he or she can be ventilated. Once stabilised they can establish whether they have antivenom or if the patient needs to be transferred to another centre. The disadvantage with cytotoxic bites (like Mozambique Spitting Cobra or Puff Adder bites) is that the longer it takes to administer antivenom, the more severe the subsequent tissue damage.



ANTIVENOM PRICING	
Polyvalent Antivenom 10 ml (Schedule 2)	R1910.00
Scorpion Antivenom 5 ml (Schedule 4)	R1910.00
Spider Antivenom 5 ml (Schedule 4)	R1910.00
Monovalent Boomslang Antivenom 10 ml (Schedule 4)	R6800.00
Prices valid April 2021 – March 2022	
Available from the South African Vaccine Producers www.SAVP.co.za	

Cost:

Polyvalent antivenom costs R1910.00 per vial (10ml) and although it can be purchased without a script it should only be administered by a medical doctor in a hospital environment or if it is an animal by a vet. It can be purchased directly from the manufacturers - the South African Vaccine Producers.

Monovalent Boomslang Antivenom costs R6800.00 per vial (10 ml) and is Schedule 4 - a script from a doctor is required to purchase it. Snakebites are expensive to treat and easily cost in excess of R100,000, with a few nights in ICU and a general ward. A recent case cost close on R1 000 000.00 after skin grafts and surgery to the bitten limb.

This is always a good reminder for snake handlers to not become complacent when dealing with venomous snakes and for the public to treat these animals with respect and call a professional if a problem snake needs to be removed.



World vegan day

giveaway



To celebrate this day and the growing global vegan movement, Hayley Cooper, Founder and CEO of Wild Dreams, who is also a certified vegan hospitality consultant, is offering an incredible **giveaway** of one of her vegan online trainings.

These trainings are a first of their kind, so if you win this, you will be one of the first people globally to receive this training and you will be trained by Hayley directly.

This is something she is very passionate about, and is excited to share her knowledge with others.

Depending on which department you are either already in, or most interested in, you get to choose which of these trainings you do!

The options are:

Vegan Hospitality for Chefs, Front of House, Housekeepers or Field Guides

In these trainings, you will be given an in-depth understanding into the vegan customer's mind.

Get to understand their wants and needs and, most importantly, know how to achieve this.

You will be able to respond confidently to your vegan customers, understand what different protocols are needed and know what the current trends are.

The training is conducted online via zoom, so all you will need is a laptop/computer with zoom downloaded for free and Wi-Fi.

The training takes 2.5 hours with a short halfway break in-between, and you will receive an e-certificate upon completion, which you can share online and as part of job applications. This will look great on your CV!

How to enter?

To be in with a chance of winning this amazing, once-in-a-lifetime training, you need to:

- Follow Wild Dreams Hospitality on [Facebook](#).
- Follow Wild Dreams Hospitality on [Instagram](#).
- Find the vegan online giveaway post and comment why you would love a chance to win this and which course you would like to do if you win.

If you aren't the lucky winner but still want to find out more about the trainings or about longer trainings (vegan hospitality for lodges/hotels/restaurants), then send Hayley an email directly to hayley@wilddreams.co.za

There will be only one winner, who will be announced on Wild Dreams' social media pages and in the December issue of the WildlifeCampus Magazine.

Best of luck!

Lions, majestic big cats

by Amy Holt
WLC Student

Up for a catastrophic loss?



There is no sound more distinctive and hair-raising than a lion roaring in the night - a sound heard as far as eight kilometres away. But, because human greed and ignorance knows no boundaries, we stand to lose Africa's largest carnivore by 2050. A century ago, there were around 200,000 lions but now only a tenth remain. In the past two decades, the number of wild lions in Africa has plummeted by roughly 40%.

All threats to lions are human-based—habitat loss, trophy hunting, poaching, canned hunting, and human-lion conflict. Human settlement and development is gradually creating even smaller and more isolated pockets of wilderness in which lions and their prey exist. This makes it challenging for lions to roam or disperse safely, and restricts gene flow which leaves populations vulnerable to disease and other threats. With rapidly growing human populations, there is an increased risk of human encroachment into lion habitat. This results in more conflict between people and lions, which often triggers farmers to retaliate by killing lions. Retaliatory killing in its worst form is conducted using poison which can kill entire prides and a host of other species—from elephants to vultures to wild dogs, leopards and cheetahs. Also, livestock outcompete wild antelope and other key prey for lions. In many cases influxes of herders are associated with secondary problems such as elevated poaching.

The bushmeat trade is the commercial sale of meat acquired through the illegal poaching of wildlife, such as antelope. Poachers typically use snares, a wire noose that is placed along trail lines, trapping and killing any animal above a certain size. This indiscriminate way of killing has devastating effects. It affects lions in two ways; reducing the prey populations for lions and by directly killing lions who inadvertently are caught in the wire snares.



The snare is an almost flawless killing machine: practical, inexpensive, lightweight, simple to make, easy to set up, silent and virtually impossible to escape. When lionesses are killed the impact is far reaching as it eliminates the possibility of future cubs being produced. When an alpha male is killed he leaves an opening in the pride, which other males seek to fill. The new male will kill cubs in the pride to stimulate the lionesses to breed again.

Trophy hunting targets the best specimens, the alpha males, in turn influencing the number of the pride if there are cubs. The selective removal of dominant males also affects the genetic makeup of a pride, removing the sought after characteristics from a gene pool and greatly weakening it.

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Flawed laws, vested interests and problematic enforcement have allowed the captive lion industry in South Africa to flourish. It is estimated that there are over 250 lion farms or ranches in South Africa. Lions are captured from the wild as cubs, raised in captivity and then forced to breed repeatedly. New born cubs are separated from their mothers as early as within one hour of birth and then raised in crowded pens. This quick separation ensures that female lions are soon fertile again and are therefore able to give birth to more cubs in their lifetime. South Africa currently has approximately three times more lions in captivity than in the wild.

Animal encounters have boomed in South Africa, catering for people who are hungry to touch and snap a selfie with the animal. Lion farmers exploit this emotional need by presenting themselves as 'wildlife sanctuaries' and tourists are easily deceived. As cubs they are used for petting interactions and walks, with the claims that the revenues from these activities support lion conservation efforts.



There is no ethical or conservation-based reason to breed lions in captivity in South Africa. The lions used in these activities are bred purely for profit, and eventually sold into the canned hunting industry once they surpass their ability to be useful, or safe, in the tourism industry. The breeding of lions is so lucrative that, over the span of its caged lifetime, a lion could bring in well over \$100,000 for a breeding facility. Canned hunting is the practice of hunting an animal in a confined space from which it cannot escape. It is one of South Africa's most lucrative industries and has simply opened up another cheaper market for hunters. If it isn't enough that the lions are exploited throughout their lives and then killed for profit, breeders have found an additional source of revenue, in their death. Once the head or skin is claimed as trophy by the hunter, the breeders sell the discarded bones to markets in Asia, where lion bones are now being used as an alternative to tiger bones in Traditional Chinese Medicine. This has created a vicious cycle of growing demand.



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The trade in lions and their body parts across international borders was restricted as early as 1977 under Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). However, in 2016, CITES granted South Africa a special annotation, essentially allowing it to decide its own legal annual export quota of lion bones, bone pieces, bone products, claws, skeletons, skulls and teeth for commercial purposes, derived from captive breeding operations. Domestically, there are a plethora of laws and regulations covering lions and other wildlife, yet huge gaps and difficulties exist with the current regulation. This patchwork system has effectively allowed the growth and protection of the lion industry, rather than safeguarding these animals from the wide range of atrocities which they face.

The captive lion industry is an ecological and economic crisis. Lions are apex predators, which means that entire food chains and ecological systems depend on healthy populations. Also, lions are a significant tourism drawcard, and tourism is a significant employer. Indeed, lions are one of the highest valued ecotourism species in Africa. However, in May 2021, the South African government announced plans to end this controversial captive lion industry. Time will tell if they stay true to their word.

Stable populations of carnivores are useful indicators of healthy and connected landscapes. The predator-prey equilibrium of any terrestrial ecosystem is dependent upon both 'bottom-up' (food resources) and 'top-down' (predation, parasites and disease) processes. All trophic levels within an ecosystem are susceptible to trophic cascades by both direct and indirect impacts of apex predators. Ecosystems that lose their apex predators and/or keystone species often witness detrimental impacts within all

trophic levels and, consequently, become dysfunctional.



As an apex predator the lion regulates the population of herbivores, such as buffalo, impala and zebra. Without population regulation through predation, species such as the zebra may outcompete other herbivores within a given area leading to interspecific issues. Interspecific competition is when two separate species share a limited resource in the same area. It has the potential to alter populations, communities and the evolution of interacting species. Further, unregulated and increasing herbivore herds exceeding an ecosystem's vegetative carrying capacity will significantly reduce food resources for many species within other trophic levels.

Most prey species favoured and selected by lions are typically gregarious, therefore, they are susceptible to disease. The loss of lions would reduce the number of healthy herd individuals and increase the host population in which a disease can thrive.

Lions, majestic big cats

by Amy Holt
WLC Student

Up for a catastrophic loss?

Lions often prey on and kill the herd members which are sick and lame, reducing the potential disease host population. Without such regulation, a pathogen is more likely to spread through a population and significantly reduce its size. By protecting a lion's landscape, we are helping the whole area to thrive. This doesn't just benefit wildlife but, the people who rely on local natural resources too.

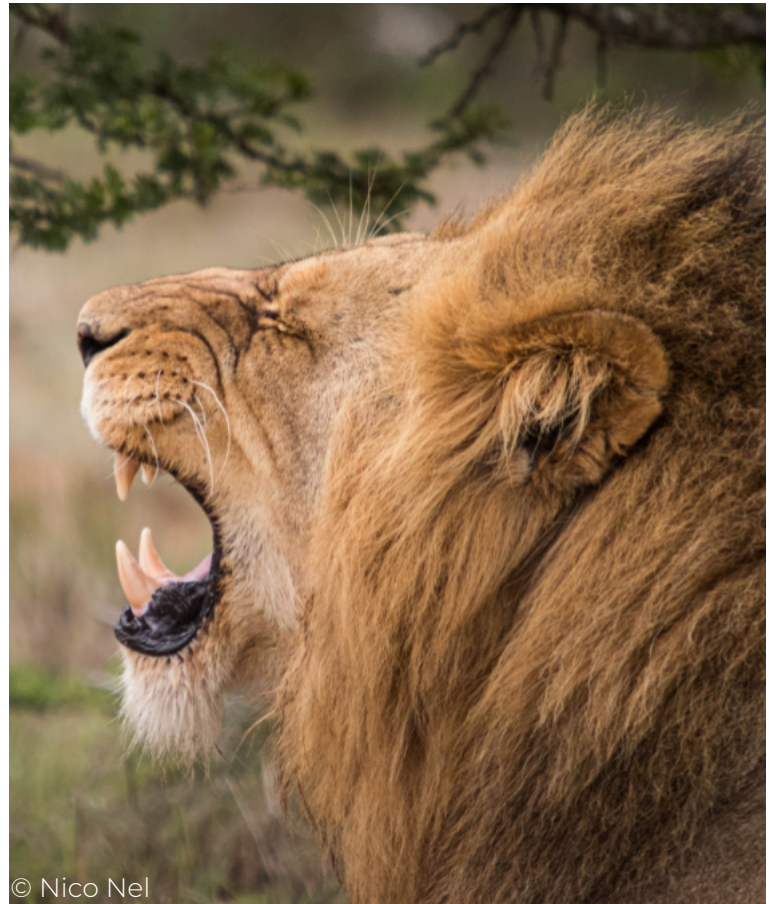


© Brad Louwrens

Lions have lost 94% of their historic range - only a few countries such as Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe harbour populations of at least 1000 lions. Lion conservation conserves much more than just lions. The lion range covers just 6.7% of Africa's land, but already contributes 11% of Africa's carbon storage and sequestration. Further, the lion range provides 11% of Africa's potential disaster risk reduction services, including erosion control, coastal protection, flood mitigation and flow regulation. Also, the lion range provides around 7% of Africa's water ecosystem services. Without lions, Africa's ecosystems would struggle to generate the

goods and services that help secure the livelihood of over 62% of the rural population, more than 300 million people in sub-Saharan Africa.

African lions have been admired throughout history as symbols of courage and strength. However, our actions do not prove this—since The Lion King first premiered in 1994, lion numbers have dropped by half. Indeed, the decline of lions is a devastating testament to our destruction and exploitation of the natural world. Waking up to a world without lions is an awful prospect, a loss too terrible to contemplate...but it doesn't have to be like this. By prioritising nature for funding, we can prevent the catastrophic loss of these majestic big cats.



© Nico Nel

A photograph of a pack of African wild dogs in a savanna environment. The dogs are in the foreground and middle ground, looking towards the right. The background shows dry grass and some trees. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

***Brand new course content
Coming soon...***

***During November and December
the WildlifeCampus team will be
updating the
Field Guiding/Game Ranging course.***

***See full information on this exciting course
update in the December issue of our magazine***

You can't rollerskate in a buffalo herd...

By David Batzofin



***“Well you can't roller skate in a buffalo herd
You can't roller skate in a buffalo herd
You can't roller skate in a buffalo herd
But you can be happy if you've a mind to”***

These are the lyrics to a Roger Miller song written back in 1965, just a year before my first visit to the Kruger National Park as a 13-year old.

Since then, I have crossed paths with many buffalo herds, while in a vehicle or on foot when on a walking trail and one thing is clear, this is an animal that you do not want to take for granted.

Several years ago while on a bushwalk, the field guide that I was with was explaining some of the animal species that we might encounter, “Next time you see a buffalo, he said, you will notice that they always look at you as if you owe them money”! No sooner were the words out of his mouth than we came out of the thicket that we had been walking through, straight into a small herd of this iconic species. It went against every fibre of my being not to run, but seeing that these animals can weigh more than a ton and can reach speeds of over 50 km/h, I froze while they slowly munched their way past us.



This was not our only encounter on that particular walk. We had done a wide loop to get back to camp to make certain that we did not bump into the ‘money-lenders’ again. However, lo and behold, when we got back to the main lodge entrance, there were two dagga boys (old bulls that no longer are excepted by the herd and go off to form grumpy old bachelor groups) waiting to see if we were up to getting past them. Indeed we were, and both myself and the guide returned unscathed to share our encounters at breakfast.

Several years later I am at a different lodge out on a game drive with a family from the USA. The youngest son was looking rather uncomfortable and after a whispered conversation between him and his mom and then mom and the guide, it was decided to stop to let the young fellow have the comfort break that he so desperately needed.



You can't rollerskate in a buffalo herd...

By David Batzofin



He and mom leapt of the vehicle and vanished behind a nearby termite mound...only to reappear moments later, ashen-faced and leap into the vehicle, without the required break having been completed. Before they could tell us why it become obvious as a herd of about 200 buffalo came slowly walking out of the bush behind the termite mound. Needless to say, the guide very quickly relocated the vehicle so that the youngster could complete his business. I have always wondered what he told his school friends when he returned home.

I have been near herds when they have lost members to wild dogs and lions. Never a pretty sight or sound, but part of the fabric of nature that binds both predators and prey inextricably.

Probably one of my most memorable experiences was at a lodge in KZN where they were due to release a herd onto the property... sounds relatively easy? Well, all the humans involved got the memo as to which direction the buffalo needed to go when released but it seems that the buffalo did not.

They came thundering out of their transporter and rocketed off in the right direction for about 200m, then wheeled around and came hurtling towards our vantage point. Luckily we were relatively prepared for this and no one was injured. The buffalo ran through the camp and generally created mayhem before finally heading off into the sunset.

I have followed herds that have newborn calves, innocent and inquisitive but always wary and never far from mom.

And I have spent time at mud wallows with huge bulls who are at the end of their lives. Looking deeply into eyes that have a lifetime of experiences to share.

But, I have never tried to roller skate with them, and I certainly have no intention of trying ... even if I had a mind to.

