

# AFRICAN INSIGHT ACADEMY

INSPIRE · EDUCATE · EMPOWER



## AFRICAN INSIGHT ACADEMY INTERNSHIP

CONSERVATION &  
ECOLOGY





Conservation Managers and Ecologists are the backbone of a game reserve, the ones that keep the effective day to day running of the reserve going. Conservation Managers in particular are perceived as a veritable "jack of all trades" requiring a very wide range of skills and experience including water provision (for people and wildlife), road, vehicle and infrastructure maintenance, fencing, anti-poaching / law enforcement as well as biological management. They, therefore, require a working knowledge of what ecological and security staff do.

An understanding of the Ecologist's role is essential when it comes to long term planning and understanding the end goal of a conservation led strategy. With the option of joining for 1,2 or 3 months, you can pick what timescale suits you and we will impart as much knowledge and teach as many skills as possible in the timeframe you give us.

### Who should apply?

- Individuals who have completed, or are in the process of completing, a relevant field of study
- Individuals who are looking for work experience or in need of practical experience as part of their studies
- Individuals who are considering conservation/ecology as a future career
- Keen citizen scientists who want to learn, contribute and expand their horizons

Our internships are designed to attract nature conservation and ecology enthusiasts, ideally with some sort of scientific background, but this is not essential! We welcome all applications whether you have an academic background or are a "citizen scientist" looking for a deeper and more hands-on conservation experience. Enthusiasm, commitment, determination and the ability to think outside of the box are skills which you will most definitely need!

### History behind Somkhanda Game Reserve

The Gumbi Tribe lost their tribal land during the years of Apartheid and in 2006 successfully won an ancestral land claim over a large area of Zululand and on a section of this they established the 12,000ha Somkhanda Game Reserve.

Somkhanda is home to populations of black and white rhino, elephant, buffalo, leopard, wild dog, lion and hyena. This unique situation affords the opportunity for interns to get involved in the reserve's wildlife and environmental management, ecological research and monitoring programs. Our experienced team offer support to ensure all field data collection methods and output are not only sound but have the right platform to be of long term benefit to the reserve, whilst providing the intern with a relevant, educational and inspirational experience.

### Examples of projects include:

- Leopard camera trap surveys
- Small mammal research
- Elephant monitoring and observation
- Road clearing and fixing
- Game counts
- Fence-line maintenance

### What do we need from you?

Dedication, commitment, hard work and your humour! Interns are mentored and managed by a dedicated and highly experienced management team. They are regarded as team members and not as tourists and are expected to also respond as such. Be prepared for an authentic South African experience!

In line with the objective of contributing to the sustainability of the game reserve all interns will be trained to facilitate academic field trips, Science on Safari and volunteer programs. You may be the one running the project so you will be responsible for the communication to school and college groups coming to Somkhanda for their academic field trip.





### Some other activities you might be involved in are:

- Wildlife monitoring techniques
- Water management for game
- Game capture (seasonal but not guaranteed)
- Community cattle dipping
- Data collecting
- Alien plant control
- Road and track maintenance
- Fire management
- Fence maintenance

### Working Hours:

A full 9 hour day is expected from interns which can vary from day to day depending on the day's task and what surprises come up. Interns get 2 days off per week and depending on what might be planned these days can be used to join our monthly group outings. Days off can be accumulated and taken together with prior arrangement.

### Optional Weekend Excursions:

At least once a month volunteers and interns in camp have the opportunity to participate in a 2 or 3 night excursion off the reserve to other tourist attractions in the region. The cost for these is not included in your fee and will be charged separately should you choose to participate.

### Conditions:

It is important that interns of this project understand the importance of the following:

- To be enthusiastic and independent
- To show respect towards the people and culture of the local community.
- To show flexibility towards responsibilities, tasks and activities.
- This is not a relaxing holiday but an experience where hard work is expected.

### Accommodation:

During your stay you will be living in two-room safari tents in the bush on a single occupancy basis. The camp is supplied with running water, communal showers and toilets. Bedding is provided and laundry facilities are available.

### Meals:

Interns have a fully equipped bush kitchen in which to prepare their own meals and have a weekly opportunity to restock on supplies from the nearest town (Pongola) which is 45 minutes away. Pongola has large supermarkets, a shopping mall and fast food outlets to cater for your every need!

### Connectivity:

There is only one service provider (Cell C) that offers coverage on the reserve, however it generally has excellent connectivity. There is internet provided at the intern office, with a capped capacity and can be used for project research and limited personal usage. We recommend buying your own Cell C sim prior to arrival to camp.

### Starting Dates

The reserve is remote and therefore intern arrivals and departures are coordinated to save on transport costs. Arrival is at Durban International airport and the transfer to Somkhanda Game Reserve leaves at 10h00. Transport is provided to departing interns (free only on the scheduled dates) back to Durban International Airport and will drop interns off at 15h00.

### 2018 (3 month interim)

08 January - 30 March  
05 February - 27 April  
5 March - 25 May  
2 April - 22 June  
30 April - 20 July  
28 May - 17 August  
25 June - 14 September  
23 July - 12 October  
20 August - 9 November  
17 September - 7 December

### 2019 (3-month Interim)

7 January – 29 March  
4 February – 26 April  
4 March – 24 May  
1 April – 21 June  
29 April – 19 July  
27 May – 16 August  
24 June – 13 September  
22 July -11 October  
19 August – 8 November  
16 September – 6 December

Costs: 3 Month ZAR 32,500 | 2 Month ZAR 24,400 | 1 Month ZAR 16,200

### Included in the fees are:

- Pick up upon arrival at Durban International airport (on scheduled dates only)
- Accommodation in our bush camp, ablutions and outdoor showers
- Use of resources and equipment on site for project purposes
- Welcome and leaving braai at the lodge on arrival and departure

- Professional mentors to supervise you
- Use of laundry facilities

### Excluded from the fees are:

- Meals (self catering - group participation)
- Other personal expenses
- Insurance
- Flights
- Monthly weekend excursions

