



Back Pack Wilderness Skills Trails Makuleke Concession, Kruger National Park.

There are many nature lovers who will seldom have the opportunity to be able to go backpacking and hiking in a pristine Big 5 wilderness game reserve, yet alone one in the Kruger National Park!! It is also not often that we get to spend quality time in the bush with experienced Trails Guides, learning from them, sharing their infectious passion for the bush and the wilderness spirit.

As a result, Shangani Trails in association with EcoTraining, the leading Guide Training Provider in South Africa, is offering a Wilderness Skills Trail that will provide just such an opportunity by spending 5 nights/6



days exploring one of South Africa's magnificent wilderness areas, the Makuleke Concession in Northern Kruger National Park, on foot.

The Venue

The 24 000 hectare Makuleke Concession is in the far northern and most remote part of the Kruger National Park. The area is characterized by great biodiversity and a human history reaching back to the remote past. Sandstone and basalt ridges blend easily with broad leafed woodlands while river flood plains support a wide variety of vegetation and animal species. Large herds of buffalo and elephant are common with the birding in this incredible part of the Kruger Park being unsurpassed.



The Makuleke has very few roads, has some of the largest Riverine and Fever Tree forests in South Africa, 2 perennial rivers, 12 natural springs and lies in the heart of the Limpopo Trans-Frontier National Park.

The Trail

This is not a qualification course and has no set curriculum. However this does not mean you will learn nothing. Each trail is led by Bruce Lawson or Alan McSmith, both being among South Africa's premier wilderness guides with only a handful of guides with the experience (over 20 years) and qualifications to lead such a course. Bruce and his wife Dee, have been based in the Makuleke Contractual Park for the past 6 years running the EcoTraining Trails Guide Camp and courses. The lead guide will be assisted by an armed back-up Trails Guide whenever the Trail numbers are between 4 and the maximum of 8.

The days revolve around the wilderness and the wilderness concept. What you will experience and learn will not be found in any text books. The skills needed to lead a wilderness trail which include, leaving minimal trace and impact, setting up an eco-friendly camp, water collection and purification and much more, will become daily rituals over the duration of the Trail.



We spend up to 5 nights/6 days immersed in the wilderness, eating sleeping and dreaming the bush. Without watches, without cell phones and without any electronic device, nature will soon become the teacher. Game viewing is not an option, it is a given, as all Big 5 or otherwise game is plentiful and could be encountered at any time. At night you will learn how to set up a camp safely with an emphasis on zero environmental impact, you will then have the opportunity to reflect on the day and life in general as you keep watch around the fire while others sleep.

What to Bring

- *Backpack:- adequate size (50l – 70l)*
- *Trail food for: (this can be provided and included in costs)*
 - *The amount will depend on the length of the Trail but for 5 days the following is recommended:*
 - *5 breakfasts*
 - *4 lunches*
 - *5 dinners*
 - *trail snacks and energy drinks (i.e. powders to mix with water)*

- *Plastic bags for refuse, what you bring in you take out.*
- *Light Sleeping bag (check temperature rating)*
- *Sleeping bag inner (if needed for warmth & keeps sleeping bag clean)*
- *Sleeping mat (foam roll mat) or light inflatable hiking mattress.*
- *Cooking/eating utensils (Light metal cup to cook and wooden spoon to eat with is sufficient)*
- *Hiking gas stove (plus spare gas canister in case you run out)*
- *Navigational aids (optional)*
- *Personal first aid kit (keep it small)*
- *Water purification tablets and/or drops, water flocculants or UV water purification*
- *3 litre bladder (to drink from whilst walking)*
 - *or any, water bottle/container with sufficient capacity*
- *Water storage containers*
 - *Collapsible bucket to collect, purify and store water overnight for cooking etc*
- *Torch/ head lamp (strong beam) - make sure batteries are new or carry spare*
- *Personal toiletries & sundry items*
 - *Toilet paper*
 - *Toothbrush plus small Toothpaste*
 - *Sunscreen*
- *Personal clothing*
 - *Neutrally coloured, 1 set for walking, 1 set for sleeping*
 - *Spare pair of socks*
 - *Fleece for cold weather*
 - *Beanie for cold heads*
- *Good comfortable walking shoes/boots/trainers*
- *Light closed comfortable shoes for evenings*
- *Rain poncho (can also be used as ground sheet to sleep on)*
- *Hat (preferably wide brimmed)*
- *The Makuleke is a Malaria area, please consult your doctor for advice on the necessary precautions.*

Minimum Requirements:

- *Love of nature*
- *A wilderness spirit*
- *Spirit of adventure*
- *Adequate fitness and ability to carry your backpack over a long distance.*

Trail Itinerary**Day 1: Meet at Luvuvhu River Bridge, Pafuri at 13H00**

- *Trailists' vehicles will be parked at the student car park, Makuleke Concession, in a very safe environment.*
- *Trail commences from the car park*
- *Walk to first overnight stop site*
- *Sleep out in bush*

Day 2/5: *Walk the Concession's key areas and sleep out in bush*

Day 6: *Return to the Car Park, depart from the car park*

We would recommend that you spend the night before departure and/or the night of the Trail closure at either Pafuri Camp-Wilderness or The Outpost Lodge. These bookings can be arranged through Shangani Trails, kindly let us know of your requirements.

All Trailists will be encouraged to participate in:

Navigation using maps and landmarks

Planning and setting up camp sites

Night watch

Planning for and collection of water replenishment

Trailing/tracking of Game where appropriate

For more informational Contact:

Rhodes Bezuidenhout

Shangani Trails at rhodes@shanganitrails.co.za or 0027- 83 7071329

