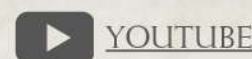




THE Askarian

ASKARI WILDERNESS CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

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BEHIND THE SCENES | STARGAZING | TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

The Stars of the Askari Skies and Grounds

A

t Askari, the team is the heart of the experience, bringing together a mix of expertise, warmth, and dedication. From those who fuel their days with coffee and conservation, to the adventurous spirits who embrace the wild, every member plays a crucial role. Some ensure the reserve runs smoothly with a deep knowledge of the land and its wildlife, while others create a welcoming, home-like atmosphere for volunteers, offering support, kindness, and a warm smile. Whether sharing stories under the African sky, guiding wildlife monitoring efforts, or keeping everything in top shape behind the scenes, Team Askari has it covered. Meet the team behind the scenes:

Ryan completed his FGASA NQF 2 in December 2023 and joined Askari in March 2024. With a deep appreciation for the wilderness, he brings both knowledge and enthusiasm to the team. When he's not out in the field, Ryan enjoys unwinding with a good book or catching up on his favorite TV shows—always with a cup of coffee in hand. His quiet moments of relaxation recharge him for the next day's adventures.

Tecla earned her FGASA NQF 2 qualification in June 2024 and became part of the Askari team the following month. Passionate about conservation, she loves immersing herself in the natural beauty of the reserve. In her downtime, she enjoys watching TV and staying connected with her friends and family back in Switzerland. Whether swapping stories about life abroad or sharing her knowledge of the bush, Tecla adds warmth and camaraderie to the team.

Lindiwe, affectionately known as Lindi, has been a pillar of Askari since 2010. With her affectionate heart and caring nature, she ensures that every volunteer feels welcome and at home from the moment they arrive. A true nurturer, Lindi has become the South African mom to many past volunteers, offering guidance, and lots of laughter. Lindi's presence is a constant source of comfort and support.






Florence, Lindi's sister, joined the Askari family in April 2024, bringing with her the same warmth and hospitality that has made Lindi so beloved. Always ready with a friendly smile, she helps make sure volunteers feel at ease during their stay. Whether assisting with daily tasks or sharing in the joy of the Askari experience, Florence's kind and welcoming nature adds to the home-away-from-home atmosphere of the reserve.


Wellex has been a dedicated member of Askari since 2018 and is the go-to expert for all things maintenance, especially within the nyala camps. Whether repairing, building, or problem-solving, he ensures that Askari runs smoothly. His deep knowledge of the plants and ecosystems within Askari is remarkable, and he's always happy to share fascinating insights with those around him. With a wealth of stories and a keen eye for the beauty of nature, Wellex is an invaluable presence on the team.

The building updates are still going strong! Here is a look at the exterior and the phenomenal job our grounds team and volunteers have been doing at making the house a home.





The volunteers gathered under the vast expanse of stars this month to learn about constellations, planets, and celestial navigation. Astronomy lessons bring the cosmos to life, blending science with storytelling as the sky reveals its secrets. Every night is another unforgettable journey through the universe under the great African Skies.



W

e continued our efforts to remove invasive lantana around Lily Pan, determined to restore the area to its natural state. With teamwork and persistence, everyone got stuck in, cutting back the dense growth and making a real impact on the landscape. As the tangled thickets cleared, more space opened up for indigenous vegetation to thrive, allowing the ecosystem to rebalance. The hard work was tough but rewarding, and seeing the difference made to the environment was a great reminder of why conservation efforts like this are so important.



TEST YOUR WILDLIFE KNOWLEDGE

MAMMALS FOUND ON PIDWA WILDERNESS

R C H A C M A B A B O O N O Z B M F
U X V O J D S C R U B H A R E U R A
S M C H E E T A H E P J W P B S I C
E S P O T T E D H Y A E N A R H M I
R E S B I A A R D V A R K C A P P V
V Q V E R V E T M O N K E Y W I A E
A E X L E O P A R D C X K G B G L T
L F L G P B R O W N H Y A E N A A L
X C A P E P O R C U P I N E G F A U
K L P K W A R T H O G P T J Z Y M L
J V X B L U E W I L D E B E E S T V
G E Q I X L G L I O N Q S S N X C S

FIND THE FOLLOWING WORDS IN THE PUZZLE:

BLUE WILDEBEEST
CAPE PORCUPINE
SPOTTED HYAENA
ZEBRA
CIVET
LION

SCRUB HARE
AARDVARK
WARTHOG
BUSH PIG
LEOPARD
CHEETAH

CHACMA BABOON
VERVET MONKEY
BROWN HYAENA
IMPALA
SERVAL

KEEP AN EYE ON FEBRUARY'S ISSUE FOR THE ANSWER SHEET.

A Day in the Life of Askari's Volunteers

A typical day as an Askari volunteer usually starts by waking up with the African sun and enjoying a cup of coffee amongst the early-morning birds in the garden. After completing any morning tasks such as weather data collection or vehicle check, it's time to hop in the game viewer and go out for morning activity.

On the way to remove invasive plants, a bird of prey is spotted, and you aid in the collection of critical data, contributing to just one of the many long-term monitoring efforts of the reserve. After helping prepare or clean up after a refreshing lunch, it's back out on the game viewer to complete a herbivore route drive survey or do mammal tracking. Breathtaking mountain views, beautiful weather, and a plethora of flora and fauna are enjoyed along the way.

A hearty dinner with everyone is finished off, and after completing any outstanding chores, a swim by the sunset awaits. You gather with the other volunteers to appreciate the surreal constellations of the night sky before heading to bed, anticipating the new adventures the next morning brings.



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